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JACK HARKAWAY AMONG THE SAVAGES.



His huge jaws opened, and the formidable teeth he possessed became visible. "God help me," cried Jack, as the beast rushed at him. "Good-bye to everybody and everything. I should have liked a better grave than that beast's stomach."

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JACK HARKAWAY

AMONG

THE SAVAGES.

CHAPTER I.

"I DON'T want to be master," Hunston continued. "But I don't see why a fellow with my experience, who has made more than one voyage, should be put on the shelf, because you choose to make a favorite of Harvey."

"Dick and I are old chums. Dick is a gentleman, which is what you never were, and will never be."

"His father's only a clerk, a half-and-half City banking Clerk; and my father has got his own property," Hunston said.

"I'm talking about the man himself, and not about fathers," replied Jack. "I say Dick's an old pal of mine, and he has always gone straight, which you have not, and that's why I made him my lieutenant."

"Won't you trust me?"

"I can't. If you were to go down on your knees, and take all the oaths you ever knew, I shouldn't feel any more comfortable with you in the place, than I should with a young cobra da capello between my ship's blankets."

Hunston looked foolish.

"You asked me for it, and now you've got it," Jack went on.

"Then you'd rather have me as an enemy," said Hunston.

"What are you now?"

"Willing to be your friend."

To Hunston's offer of friendship Jack simply replied:

"Bosh! over the left."

"All right, my hearty. It don't make much difference to me," cried Hunston. "If I can't have your friendship, I'll have—"

"What?" asked Jack, as he hesitated.

"Your head!" replied Hunston.

Jack and Harvey regarded him with amazement.

Was he going to make another attack upon them?

What did he mean? Jack scarcely knew how to deal with Hunston.

He was in a sort of a fix.

Hunston was not slow in taking advantage of the impression he had made upon Jack.

"I suppose you know," he went on, "that the natives you saw to-day are head-hunters."

"Yes, I gathered as much as that," answered Jack.

"Very well, then we can sail fair," continued Hunston, who stooped down to repossess himself of his knife. "Am I to go?"

"How can I keep you here, when you are always trying to prod me with knives, and won't knock under?"

"I never did, and never will. The man isn't born who I shall call master."

"But don't you know?" exclaimed Jack, "that even the savages have a chief. There

must be some head to keep things in working order. What is it you want?"

"My idea is that of a republic. One man's as good as another. Let us live like brothers, and share and share alike."

"Yes," Harvey said, derisively, "a nice brother you'd make. If you had the key of the spirit chest, you'd be as tight as a drum in an hour."

"A good job, too," replied Hunston. "But don't you put your say in. I'm talking to your master."

"Who's that?"

"Harkaway; didn't he say he was king? Very well. If he is, of course he's your master as well as mine, though that's not what I'm driving at. I'm to go, that's a fact. I don't care much, for I shall go to the natives and make terms with them. They will plan an attack on you here, and I shall show them the way, so you know what you've got to expect."

"That's a nice return for all our kindness," observed Jack.

"Kindness," repeated Hunston, scornfully.

"I don't see that we have treated you badly."

"Oh, don't you! I am sorry for you then."

"You have tried more than once to take away my life, and I suppose you know that is murder," exclaimed Jack, severely.

"If you were at home you would be tried and hanged for it."

"Hanged for killing a thing like you?"

"Never mind what I am. You need not be so cocky! I could shoot you now and be justified in doing so," Jack said, coloring.

"Why?"

"Simply because you have basely and treacherously tried to take away a life you cannot give back again! You're like a dog that bites the hand that feeds it!"

"Well, I'm off! My name's Walker, and I can see the sooner I slope out of this caboose the better! It won't take me long to find better diggings. Will you give me a gun and some powder and shot?" said Hunston.

"Not likely," answered Jack. "You don't take me for a such a flat, do you? I may be green—I know I am green in some things—but I'm not so jolly, thundering green as all that!"

"I only want to shoot something."

"Somebody, you mean, and that somebody is myself. No, thank you. When I'm tired of life I'll make you a present of our best double-barreled, but not before!"

"I mean I want to kill something to live upon," said Hunston, looking confused.

"Over the left," remarked Harvey.

"Join your friends, the niggers! You're worth your grub to them. They'll board and edge you," replied Jack.

"I may not find them at once."

"Why not?"

"They don't live here," replied Hunston, becoming confidential. "This is a desert island, with no inhabitants except ourselves. They come over in proas or long boats."

"How do you know that?" queried Jack, who was much interested in this announcement.

"I heard the Tuan Biza talking and asked him a lot of questions. They call this Pulo Kapul or Ship Island, because it is a dangerous coast, and ships have been wrecked here before."

"What did they come here for?"

"For a spree, I suppose. There was some ceremony on, and it was a sort of excursion," answered Hunston.

"I don't understand the habits of the beggars," exclaimed Jack. "But are you sure you are not humbugging us?"

"No, I'm not really. I tell you the truth. The natives you saw come from some distance. They had, as far as I can ascertain, boarded an English merchant vessel, for they were awful pirates, and they had killed all the passengers and crew except a young girl, whom they led captive to their own town or village."

"An English girl?" asked Jack, his face flushing indignantly.

"Yes."

"Well, cut along, Hunston," Jack said; "you can't stop here until you get better ideas; I won't say into your head, but into your heart; that's where you are wrong, old boy."

"Good-bye," muttered Hunston, as Harvey left the doorway to make room for him to pass.

"I'll tell you one thing," Jack went on, "if you come back ready and willing to make one of us, I shall always be glad to forget what's happened. I can't say more than that, can I?" Hunston was silent.

"Can I, Dick?" repeated Jack.

"I'm sure you can't," replied Harvey.

"Oh, yes," sneered Hunston, "you want to be a couple of jolly good-natured fellows, don't you? That sort of lingo is only meant to glorify yourselves, and make me look small."

"I won't waste any further words with you," Jack said, in a tone of annoyance. "Clear out."

He stood on one side, and Hunston quitted the castle in the gray dawn of early morning, and was soon lost to sight in the distance.

"A good riddance," remarked Jack.

"Yes, he's useless; and I suppose I can take my forty winks now," replied Harvey.

Jack replied in the affirmative, and walked up and down outside the castle, gun in hand, so as to be ready in the event of a surprise.

He thought over his present position, and thoughts of home came into his mind.

Would he ever see his home again?

Surrounded on all sides by peril, it was extremely doubtful, but he kept a good heart and did not despair.

Thinking of what Hunston had told him about the wreck of an English ship on a neighboring island, and the capture of a young lady by the natives, caused his thoughts to turn to Emily.

It was pleasant to think that she was happy with her friends.

To know that the natives had only visited his island was consoling, because they were not so likely to attack him.

What would Hunston do?

He had, in his bullying, blustering way, threatened to make friends with the natives if he fell in with them again.

Very likely he might be able to effect a union with them.

And flushed with the hope of plunder as well as human heads, they would not be a force to be despised.

Yet he could not blame himself for letting Hunston go away.

While in the castle he was always plotting against Jack and seeking his life.

He was his enemy anyhow.

All Jack could do was to be always on the watch.

He resolved that he would go out the next day and once more explore the island, so as to see if the savages were still upon it.

In his belt he placed pistols and knives, and over his shoulder he carried his breech-loading gun.

When Harvey heard his intention he begged to be allowed to accompany him.

This he could not agree to, as it would not have been safe to leave the castle in the care of Maple.

So Jack started alone.

Having set off before the heat of the day came on, Jack, in about three hours, had done his ten miles.

He passed several lakes fringed with ferns; hot, sulphurous fumes exhaled from them.

On one was a flock of wild birds which he longed to have a shot at but he did not deem it prudent, as he might give an indication of his presence to his enemies.

Occasionally he came across springs and streams of steaming, boiling water, showing the volcanic nature of the ground for miles near the burning mountain.

A range of hills rose up before him, and from these descended a variety of streams which formed themselves into a river.

This gradually increased in size and volume till it reached the sea.

It was magnificently wooded on both sides, and, as Jack stood on the bank and gazed up and down, he thought what a lovely place it would be to come and fish in.

Vines, shrubs, and large trees were mingled together, while gaudy-plumaged birds disported themselves in the dense foliage.

Even a photograph could scarcely convey a correct and adequate idea of the magnificence of the scenery.

Being hot and tired, Jack made up his mind to have a bath.

For a moment he forgot that there might be dangerous reptiles in the river.

The water looked so cool and tempting that he could not resist it.

Laying down his gun, pistols, and knives, he took off his clothes, and selecting a good place on the bank to jump off from, plunged in with a header.

He came up with the sparkling water bubbling over his head.

"This is jolly," he exclaimed, "I wish old Harvey was here. How he would enjoy it."

And he struck out to cross the river, the stream of which was not very strong.

He had not gone more than a dozen yards before he heard a shouting behind him.

Turning round he saw three men.

A glance seemed to show him that they were savages.

They gesticulated and held up their hands in which were spears, as if to arrest his attention.

Luckily he had taken the precaution to hide his weapons and clothes under a carraway tree, the long, needle-like leaves of which effectually protected and concealed them.

It seemed as if the natives were telling him to come back.

"Thank you," muttered Jack to himself, "I'd rather not. I've no doubt you're very nice when one knows you, but I've no desire to have the pleasure of your acquaintance; we'll postpone the honor."

His intention was to swim to the opposite bank and make his escape.

He could return for his gun and clothes when they were gone.

Anything was better than falling into their hands.

The noise made by the natives redoubled.

"What a row the varments are kicking up," Jack said, wondering what they meant.

He was very soon to find out.

Suddenly he saw something in the water ahead of him.

Something ugly and scaly, like the head of a monster in a pantomime.

A thing with dull eyes, but big jaw, which he knew in an instant belonged to a crocodile.

It was between him and the shore.

Behind him were the natives.

It was death to retreat, and looked very much like death to advance or stay where he was.

Jack's blood turned cold, and he felt as if the water, which he had hitherto thought temperate, had become icy.

"I'm a gone coon," he said to himself; "either the crocodile or the niggers must have me, and its odds on the croc."

It was certainly an awkward meeting, and showed the danger of bathing in a river in the tropics.

What was he to do.

Jack had not the remotest idea.

He stared at the crocodile, and the repulsive brute stared back again at him.

CHAPTER II.

THE FEAST OF THE CANNIBALS.

"Yes," continued Jack to himself, "I'll back the fish. It's long odds on the scaly monster of the deep."

But in spite of his apparent levity, he was very much alarmed.

His position seemed a hopeless one.

He was afraid to move much, and kept treading water and floating gently down the stream.

If he moved he had an idea that the crocodile would at once make a dive at him.

All at once he heard something whizz past his ear.

A short stick floated on the water near him, and he fancied that the natives were shooting arrows at him, and trying to kill him.

"That's coming it too strong," he muttered. "It's getting hot now and no mistake."

Another and another of these short sticks fell close to him, and Jack grasped one, remarking that it was sharpened at both ends, and seemed to be cut from a very hard wood.

This action of his may have roused the crocodile, who was of average size, for the monster moved toward Jack.

His huge jaws opened, and the formidable teeth he possessed became visible.

"God help me," cried Jack, as the beast rushed at him. "Good-bye to everybody and everything. I should have liked a better grave than that beast's stomach."

The instinct of self-preservation was very strong within him.

Scarcely knowing why he did so, he put out his hand.

In it was the short stick shot at him by the natives.

This he thrust into the crocodile's mouth quite suddenly.

His jaws tried to close, to bite off the boy's

appetizing arm, but they shut on the sharp edges of the hard stick.

Unable to open or shut his mouth, the creature lashed the water into foam.

The natives had been very quiet for a time. Now they set up a shout.

This led Jack to believe that they had purposely sent him the sharpened sticks, and not with the intention of injuring him.

Whether their intention was friendly or not he could not tell.

Perhaps they wanted to eat him themselves, and did not like the idea of a crocodile having such a tidbit all to itself.

"They may be friendly, or they may be t'other. Very much t'other, I should suspect," said Jack. "However, I shan't give them the chance of chawing up this child."

Anxious to get out of the water as soon as possible, he swam with quick strokes to the opposite bank to that on which the natives were standing.

The crocodile followed him, though it was as inoffensive as a lamb now.

Once on the shore, Jack sank on his knees and thanked Heaven.

Then he took up a stone and threw it at the crocodile, upon which it made no impression.

"The brute's like a hog in armor," remarked Jack.

He ran for some distance, but the heat of the sun was inconvenient. He climbed up a tree and hid himself among the thick leaves.

Here he remained until the sun's power decreased.

He was so delighted at his escape from the dangers that menaced him, that he did not care for such little evils as being scorched by the sun or parched with thirst.

When he could conveniently do so, he intended to seek a place near the river's source where he could ford the stream.

Nothing would have induced him to swim across the river again.

To be face to face, when bathing, with a crocodile is quite enough once in a lifetime.

He learnt afterwards that it was not at all unusual for the natives to thrust sharp-pointed sticks into the monster's jaws, and so render him incapable of closing them.

That some natives still lingered on the island he had no doubt.

On dry land, and armed, he did not fear them.

It appeared, from what he learned subsequently, that when they saw him in the water they took him to be one of their own party.

Their shooting the sticks with their bows toward him was no proof of their friendliness to him.

Perhaps they were not a little surprised when they saw him get out of the water, with his white skin shining in the sun.

In time Jack descended from the tree, and made his way, as well as he could with his naked feet, along the river bank.

He found a ford about two miles further up, crossed, and went toward the spot where he had left his clothes.

To his joy, he discovered them just as he had left them.

It did not take him long to dress, and with his gun and pistols he felt himself a man once more.

It was time to get back, so he started on the homeward journey, not having done much that day.

That island was much larger than he had imagined, he had found out, as well as that it had a water shed from a range of hills of some importance.

In addition to this, the natives had not yet gone away.

There was a source of danger in this fact, for if Hunston was as good as his word, and made friends with these savages, he might at any moment lead them against his former companions.

While thinking of the dangers ahead, Jack stopped abruptly.

A wild sound fell upon his ears, which he knew from his experience of the day before, was the festival chant of the nation.

Approaching very cautiously, he saw he had

arrived at the spot where the savages had been singing joy songs over the capture of Hunston.

Had they got him again?

A glance sufficed to show him that the victim tied to the bamboo stake was not Hunston, nor did he see any trace of that young gentleman.

Fascinated by the expectation of some horrible spectacle, Jack halted, being well concealed, and looked on.

"Here's the show, gratis for nothing, and I don't see why I shouldn't peep at it," was Jack's remark.

A sharpened prop was placed under the prisoner's chin, so that he could not move his head.

One look at the wretched man's face proved conclusively that he had given up all hope of life.

It was possible to read nothing there but blank, hopeless despair.

Presently the barbaric chant ended.

The Tuan Biza stepped forward with a large, sharp knife in his hand.

As the chief, it was his privilege to cut out of the living victim any piece he liked best.

The parts of the human body which are esteemed the greatest delicacies by these cannibals are first, the palms of the hands, and then the eyes.

When the chief has gratified his choice, the others are entitled to advance and cut out bits.

The savage feast proceeded quickly, and the victim's moans were piteous to hear.

Jack ground his teeth with rage, but on looking to his rifle, found that he had lost his percussion cap off the nipple, and had not another with him. Besides, the man might have been a criminal for what he knew.

It was evident that those men did not eat human flesh for lack of animal food.

Abundance of game was to be met with, as Jack knew.

They indulged their appetites in this beastly manner because they liked it.

It was a very long time before Jack got the sight of the hacked and bleeding form from his eyes.

Sick at heart, and faint, he glided from the spot, and struck out for home.

When he reached the castle, he related his adventures to Harvey, who listened with increasing horror at each fresh detail.

Maple was equally impressed.

"I'm glad you got away from the crocodile," said Maple. "But it would have been worse to fall in with the natives. Do you think they would eat us?"

"Yes, like a shot," answered Jack. "But I don't mean to give them a chance."

"Will they attack us?" said Harvey, "that is the question."

"Yes, a hundred to one on it," answered Jack. "Hunston will make his peace with, and become one of them, solely by promising them the plunder of our castle, and the enjoyment of our bodies. I don't expect him to-night, though we shall not be safe from one hour to the other."

"Let me watch, Jack," exclaimed Maple, "and give me a gun. I'm sure I can shoot."

"I can't trust you," replied Jack.

"Not when our lives are in danger?" I should not, for my own sake, let the natives capture us."

"Yes, you might, if Hunston got hold of you and promised you your own life. That's what it is to have a bad character," Jack continued. "You might in this crisis help us a great deal, but we know what you are; so, while Harvey and I do the watching and fighting, you must be the indoor servant, Sally the housemaid, and Polly the cook, rolled into one; so set about your business at once, and let me have some dried venison and something to drink."

Maple slunk away, ashamed of himself, and annoyed at not being allowed to act the part of a man.

It was his own fault, however, and he had only himself to thank for it.

"You're dull, Jack," observed Harvey, pouring him out a glass of wine.

"My nerves are a little shaken," answered Jack, drinking the wine at a draught.

"No wonder."

"And I've got an idea that stirring events are going to happen."

"I wish a ship would come and take us away," said Harvey, with a sigh, as he thought of home.

"So do I, but I don't know that I should go in her," replied Jack.

"Why not?" asked Harvey, in surprise.

"You heard what Hunston said about a ship being wrecked on another island?"

"Yes."

"And an English girl being saved?" continued Jack.

"And taken into the interior as a captive or slave, or something," said Harvey.

"That was it," replied Jack, adding, "well, I want to save that girl, and bring her away with me; and I shouldn't think myself a man, or be happy all my life, if I had the chance of going away, and did not make something more than an effort to rescue that English girl."

"By Jove! you're right, Jack. I always said you were a fine fellow," cried Harvey, his eyes speaking the admiration he felt.

Involuntarily the boys' hands met in a cordial grasp.

It was a silent compact between them to save their fair and unfortunate countrywoman at all hazards.

CHAPTER III.

KEPT IN SUSPENSE.

A FEW days passed without bringing any cause of alarm to the castaways.

Jack did not decrease in vigilance.

He and Harvey kept a good lookout, distrusting Maple, who was treated as their drudge, for they knew his deceitful nature, and feared lest he might in some way be in communication with Hunston.

The captain's dog, Nero, of which we have spoken, was tied up outside the castle, so that he might give notice of the approach of any foe.

He would not bark at any of the boys, and not knowing what Hunston's real character was, he rather liked him in return for meat and biscuits he had given him, but the slightest tread of a strange footstep would make his loud bark resound through the woods.

"I wish I knew the worst," Jack remarked to his friend. "If Hunston is going to lead the natives to attack us, he might do it and get the thing over."

Perhaps he's not so bad as we think him, and will change his mind," answered Harvey.

"Not he," said Jack, with a shake of his head. "I know him of old. He only cares for himself. He would like to be king of the savages, and have all our stores and firearms, but he hasn't got them yet."

"That reminds me of an idea I had," said Harvey.

"Out with it then; don't be afraid of it."

"If we were attacked it would be from the clearing we've made, as the enemy could act more compactly together. My idea is to load, say twenty guns, and fix them nearly all together, so that we could tie a string to the trigger, pull it and fire a volley, which would kill the lot."

"All right," said Jack. "I loaded about thirty guns yesterday, and put them in a corner, so that I could take up one after another and let fly at the niggers on the principle of one down, t'other come on."

This idea of Harvey's was adopted, and a formidable battery erected in a few hours.

The boys felt more comfortable when they had taken every precaution against a surprise that prudence suggested.

"Some of these guns are oldish. I hope they won't bust up," remarked Jack, with a smile.

"If you think that," answered Harvey, regarding the battery fondly, "let's make Maple pull the string. If he was blown into little bits and smithereens he wouldn't be much loss."

"I should like to take a stroll and see what is going on," Jack said, anxiously.

"You musn't venture a yard from the castle, Jack," cried Harvey. "I won't have it. Our only chance is in the bundle of sticks dodge. We must hang together. How do you know that we are not being watched now from some bush, and that your departure on a stroll would be the signal for a rush in and a surprise of the place. It makes my hair curl to think of it."

"All right. I won't leave you," Jack replied, "though this continued suspense is not at all to my liking. Perhaps the natives have left the island, their game of jinks being over, and Hunston can't find them."

"No," said Harvey, thoughtfully. "He's found them. If he hasn't, he'd have been back. How could he live without arms to kill birds and things? He's met with them, and is getting up something for us."

"He'll meet with a hot reception. Our guns will astonish the weak nerves of his new friends."

"That's what he's afraid of. He wants to catch us napping."

"Don't he wish he may get it?" answered Jack, adding, "I say, Dick, have you noticed those fine birds that look like pheasants—the beggars that eat our corn up? Look at them now; they're wiring in like steam. Here, Maple, you little humbug, why don't you go and bird-flap? It's all you're fit for."

"They won't go away," replied Maple, who was hoeing the weeds out of some potatoes that had just begun to sprout.

"You've only got to show your ugly mug and they'll have fits," replied Jack. "Whistle, howl, do something. Give them a 'lul-li-e-ty' like that we used to wake old Crawcour up with, and drive Mole mad on the winter evenings at Lillie Bridge."

"I wish I was back there again," said Maple, almost tearfully.

"You ungrateful little viper," exclaimed Jack, sarcastically. "Do you mean to say that you don't appreciate the honor of being head cook and bottle-washer to King Harkaway and Duke Harvey, his prime minister, home secretary, and all the rest of it?"

"Duke Humbug," muttered Maple.

"What's that you say?" asked Harvey. "I'll give you something, my fine fellow. Come here and do homage. Come on."

"Do what?" said Maple, laying down his hoe and advancing.

"Do homage. Kneel on both knees, and put my feet on your head in token of submission. You won't? Lend me that stick, an' it please your most gracious majesty. I must welt this disobedient servant."

Jack handed him a stick he carried in his hand, and laughed heartily.

"Lamn in to him," he said.

"Oh, don't hit me, Harvey," roared Maple. "I'm sore all over from the last hiding you gave me, I'll do homage or any other act you like."

Accordingly Harvey refrained, and Maple, kneeling down, put his head under the prime minister's feet, and was afterwards allowed to resume his work.

"That will teach you not to be cheeky," observed Harvey. "We don't allow any Radicals here."

Maple gave him a spiteful look, and went to the cornfields to drive away the gaudy-plumaged birds that were making such sad havoc with the corn.

They rose in a body as he approached but when he went away they soon came down again.

Jack tried to get a shot at them, and found them too wary, for they would not let him get near them.

In appearance they resembled pheasants, and seemed as if they would be excellent eating.

"I never saw such wary brutes," Jack observed: "It's a nuisance, too, because if we could kill a few, we could see what they would be like in the pot, and we should also be able to make some scarecrows to keep the rest away. I can't get near them."

"I'll tell you a dodge," remarked Harvey. "Although

I'm a Londoner and the gov's a clerk in the City, I've been a good deal at myuncle's farm in Gloucestershire and I'll tell you how he gets his game."

"Shoots it, I suppose?"

"No; he doesn't shoot it either; so you're out there. The landlord wouldn't let him start a feather with a gun," answered Harvey, with a knowing wink.

"How is it done, then?" asked Jack.

"I'll show you. You know those fowls we saved from the wreck?"

"Yes; they're in the coop now. A cock and three hens. I had an egg for my breakfast this morning. What of them?"

"Go and bring the cock, will you? He's a regular old Turk to fight, and I'll show you some fun."

Jack went to the hen coop and brought out the cock, which was a thoroughbred game fowl.

During his absence, Harvey had broken off two blades from his penknife, which he had in his pocket.

Taking the bird from Jack, he fixed the blades on to the creature's legs.

"Those don't make bad spurs, do they?" he asked.

"Not at all," answered Jack.

"Follow me, then, and you shall see a match between the English barndoor fowl and the East Indian non-descript."

They approached the cornfield, and the handsome birds flew away, perching as usual some distance off on high trees.

Harvey put down the cock, which began to crow loudly, and the boys hid behind the trunk of a tree.

The birds came cautiously back to their food, and one of the males, not liking the appearance of a stranger on the scene, flew down and gave battle.

The birds flew at one another, and the issue was not long doubtful.

The English bird struck his enemy, and the blade of the penknife cut into his head, causing him to fall down with a death flutter.

"Dead as mutton," whispered Harvey gleefully.

"What a lark!" said Jack, in the same tone.

"Hold your noise," cried Harvey. "There's another coming to have a pitch in."

He was right.

Another of the beautiful birds came to fight the intruder, and with an angry screech, which the cock met with a crow of defiance, the battle began, and ended quickly with the same result.

In a short time, half-a-dozen fine cock-birds were lying on their sides.

Harvey thought that enough, and took the victorious game-fowl back to the coop, having previously removed his formidable spurs, and then he rewarded him for his prowess with a handful of corn.

"What do you think of that?" asked Harvey, rejoicing, Jack, who was examining the spoil.

"Stunning. Your uncle was a genius, Dick," replied Harkaway.

"That's how we used to get the squire's birds, as the keepers never heard a gun fired, they never twigged the caper. But I'll show you something else. My aunt was very fond of partridges, and we used to give them her. First of all we spotted a covey, and when this was done, we were bound to have them."

"How?"

"Give me about an hour, and I'll show you. I've got to make my preparation," answered Harvey.

"Cut along, then," said Jack, adding:

"Maple."

"Yes, Jack," answered Maple.

"Don't 'yes Jack' me," exclaimed Harkaway, with an affectation of anger. "I'm king. Speak to me with proper and becoming respect."

"Very well, my lord," said Maple.

"That won't do. It's not grand enough."

"What does your majesty require? Will that do?"

"It's better. Take a brace of those birds; pluck them, and stick them before the fire. I want to see how they eat."

Maple sat down and began his task with a groan.

He hated plucking and cleaning birds.

But grumbling was no use and he had to do it.

CHAPTER IV.

HUNSTON'S RECEPTION BY THE NATIVES.

To use his own expression, Hunston was rather "down in the mouth," as he threaded his way through the luxuriant vegetation of the tropics. The day had broke with its usual splendor, and though not insensible to the beauties of nature, he had no inclination just then to give rein to his admiration.

His mind was full of dark black thoughts.

"I hate Harkaway," he muttered; "I always did dislike him, and now I detest him more than ever. We never cottened at school, and it's clear we can't pull together."

He forgot that Jack's hostility was entirely provoked by his own bad conduct.

He had never kept faith with his companions, and he had not hesitated to act in the most murderous manner towards them.

Was it any wonder that Jack was obliged to use harsh and strong measures?

But the wicked are always slow to blame themselves. Their evil thoughts led them to think unkindly of the virtuous and good.

As he went along he passed groves of nutmeg trees growing wild.

This useful tree is in such abundance that the land is full of it without it being planted by anyone.

All the islands in the Archipelago produce it more or less.

When June and September come, the nutmeg, which produces the mace outside the shell, is ready for gathering, and when the natives are inclined for trade, it brings a rich harvest.

Feeling thirsty, Hunston threw a heavy stone at a

cocoa-nut palm, and brought down a rich cluster of the ripe fruit.

Cutting them open with his knife, he put his mouth to them and sucked out the rich juice.

Then he stooped down and cut a pineapple.

The Malays and Javaneze call it *nanas*, and are very fond of it.

"Fancy a fellow cutting pineapple and sucking cocoa nut," said Hunston. "Those who go so sea have a chance of meeting with strange things. Some chaps like it. I don't. I'd rather be smoking my pipe and dipping my beak into a foaming pewter of malt in some quiet pub, going out of the Strand or Tower Hill, than running wild in this beastly hole."

He had not gone much further before he saw a tall dark form in front of him.

"Scissors!" he ejaculated.

He had come face to face with a native whom he had not much difficulty in recognizing as the Tuan Biza.

The recognition was mutual.

"Ha!" exclaimed the chief. "Has the great spirit sent you to us again?"

A cruel smile played round the corners of his ugly black mouth.

"Fiddlesticks," said Hunston. "I've nothing to do with spirits, although I shouldn't mind four of pale brandy, cold, with a lump of ice in it. This land of yours is so jolly hot."

"Why do you seek our camp then?" continued the Tuan Biza, who did not know whether to regard Hunston as a friend or enemy.

"To put you up to a good thing. Do you know English enough to understand that?"

The chief nodded his head in token of assent.

"I want to be your friend," continued Hunston. "Let us enter into an explanation. When you caught me a few days back, I had had a row with my companions."

"Ah!" said the Tuan Biza, with a significant look. "Those who with you were wreck."

"Just so."

"How many?"

The chief counted on his fingers, one, two, three, four.

Then Hunston stopped him.

"There were four," he said, but one is dead. That is to say, we were five in all. One being dead, and I being here, the number is reduced to three. Do you understand?"

"Yes," replied the Tuan Biza.

"Very well. They have arms, guns, pistols, and powder. Do you know what those are?"

"No," replied the chief. "I learn English when I work in the hold of a ship; but I never see what you speak of. I go to the coast, but not know much."

"I'll enlighten your ignorance, then," said Hunston. "You remember Buru being hurt, as you thought, by the spirit? Well it was a shot fired from a gun held by one of my late companions."

The chief intimated that he had heard of such wonderful things, though he had never handled them, and he thought he had seen them, but he had never taken any particular notice of or interest in them.

In fact, the Tuan Biza knew very little about the habits, customs and weapons of civilized countries.

He had obtained his knowledge of English from some traders to whom he sold spice, and who employed him to load the cargo; but that was long ago.

With great difficulty Hunston made him understand that guns could kill anything at a certain distance, and that his three companions had a good store of them, together with powder and shot.

He added that they lived in a house he had built, not far from where they were then standing, and that they had saved a variety of valuable things from the wreck of their ship.

The Tuan Biza was a sharp man in his way, and he comprehended Hunston's meaning so far as to say:

"You want to be one of us, a head-hunter?"

"Yes, I should like to have Jack's head and Harvey's," replied Hunston, savagely.

"Who Jack? Who Harvey?" asked the chief.

"The people in the castle—Jack's castle."

"And the other, the three one?"

He meant the "third" one.

"Oh, he's a pal o' mine; a friend I mean, and I'll entice him out. I don't want his head."

"And you will show us how to get the lightning guns and the stores?"

"Of course I will. You and I with your men can do it," answered Hunston. "But tell me, why are you stopping here?"

"Buru is badly hurt," replied the Tuan Biza. "I thought the spirit struck him by lightning, but I now see it was the fire-gun. We came here to have a feast, according to our customs. We not live here. Our island many miles, fifteen, twenty, thirty from here. When Buru well, we go back in two boat."

"Oh, that's it? Will you take me with you, and make me your king?"

"First give us the fire-gun and the ship's things. Do this for us and we will make you king," answered the Tuan Biza, cautiously.

"That's an agreement. I'll lead you against Jack's castle."

"When?"

"Oh, there's no hurry. We'd better wait a few days, as they expect an attack now, and if we are quiet, they will not be so watchful. You see we have no guns, and they have an advantage over us."

"Come with me," said the chief. "I will make you friendly with my young men. You are tattooed, and they will not hurt you, because they think you are under the protection of the great spirit."

"You won't let Keyali have my head? Keyali wants a head, you know," remarked Hunston.

"I am Tuan Biza," answered the chief, drawing himself up grandly.

"All right. I only want to be on the safe side. No

tricks upon travelers. Don't you try any games on with me. It won't wash."

This speech was not very comprehensible to Tuan Biza, but he seemed to catch the sense of it, and taking Hunston by the hand, led him some little distance to the camp.

The warriors were surprised to see Hunston.

His appearance, owing to his recent tattooing, was rather savage and ferocious, but they might not have received him favorably, unless the chief had told them that he was their great friend, and was to get them heads and many good things belonging to the white men.

When the Tuan Biza's companions understood the benefit that Hunston was going to confer upon them, and realized that their chief had made a compact with him, they crowded around Hunston, and gave him signs of friendship.

This was enough for Hunston.

When he felt that his life was safe, he became arrogant once more.

"Give me some of the spirit stuff you make out of the palm," he exclaimed.

They brought him what he required in the half of a cocoanut.

Then he threw himself down on some leaves under a tree and prepared to go to sleep.

"Keep your friends away from me, will you?" he continued to the chief. "I may be a worthy object of curiosity, but I want to be quiet for a spell, and your nigger friends don't smell nice when the wind blows this way."

The Tuan Biza ordered the open space around Hunston to be kept clear.

He collected his companions in another spot, and told them all that Hunston was going to do for them.

At the prospect of heads, and plunder into the bargain, they all grew jolly.

The palm spirit passed freely from one to another.

War songs were sung, and they talked of nothing else than the coming murder of the whites, against whom their new associate Hunston was to lead them.

Hunston and the savages had made friends.

The alliance boded no good to Jack and his companions in the castle.

But some people's consciences are elastic.

At all events Hunston slept calmly and did not seem to be troubled with bad dreams.

CHAPTER V.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SEA.

IN about an hour Harvey came out of the castle with a basin full of peas.

"What have you got there?" inquired Jack.

"Peas—soaked in oil of vitriol," replied Harvey. "You'll see the birds pick them up and roll about quite groggy, when we can go and wring their necks. The peas will burn a hole in their crops, and fall out of themselves, so that the game won't be injured at all."

"You and your uncle were up to a few rummy dodges," remarked Jack. "I should call him a scientific poacher."

"He was all that. It was a lark to hear the squire's keeper come and say 'I can't make out, Mr. Harvey, where all the birds go to. Covey after covey vanishes. There must be some desperate poacher about somewhere,'" replied Harvey, laughing as he thought of it.

Walking to the edge of the clearing, Harvey scattered the peas about, and retired to watch the result.

The timid birds did not come down from the trees until the coast was clear.

When the flock found out the peas, which had been partially boiled in hot water, and then soaked in vitriol, they snapped them up savagely.

The effect was soon visible.

They were unable to fly, and staggered about in eccentric circles.

Jack and Harvey rushed up and seized them easily, wringing their necks, and bagging several dozen, which thinned the flock considerably.

The finest they reserved for eating—the others they tied to stakes driven in the ground, and used as scarecrows to frighten the others away.

"We might have tried that dodge on with old Mole's pigeons at Crawcour's," remarked Jack.

Maple now appeared with Jack's dinner. The birds were done to a turn, and found to be excellent eating.

"I don't know what this fowl is called, but it eats better than parrot," Jack remarked, "and your plan of killing these things will save our powder and shot, of which we haven't got too much. Try a wing?"

"Don't mind if I do," answered Harvey.

It was the custom of Maple to go to the signal station that Mr. Mole had built, for an hour every day, to sweep the sea with a glass in the hope of seeing a passing sail.

Approaching Jack, he exclaimed:

"Shall I go to the look-out now?"

"Have you done your work?" replied Jack.

"Yes."

"Cut along, then, and don't go asleep as you did the other day. If I come up and find you winking even, I'll take it out of you," Jack said.

Maple put the telescope under his arm, and went to the beach.

Harvey and Jack liked the birds so much that they cooked another brace.

It was a lovely day, and after looking through the glass and seeing nothing in the sign of a ship, Maple thought he would like a bath.

"The sea looks jolly tempting," he muttered. "I'll chance a walloping. Jack's gorging those birds, and he's a beggar to eat when he gets anything he likes. I'll have a dip, if I die for it."

Quickly throwing off his clothes, he walked along the hot sands, which almost burned his naked feet, until he came to a rock-bound pool, clear as crystal.

The retiring tide had left it full of water, and its depth was about three feet, while the circumference might have been a couple of dozen yards.

Beautiful shells and sprigs of coral glistened at the bottom, which, like the beach, was lined with soft, golden sand.

Plunging in, Maple splashed about like a young and sportive porpoise.

"This is something like," he exclaimed, as he beat the water back in childish sport. "The sun has just made the water deliciously warm. This is Jack and Harvey's bathing-place. They'll warm me if they catch me."

Suddenly his eye caught something round and black lying on the top of the water, half hidden by a patch of sea-weed in which it had got entangled.

"What's that?" he cried, "it looks like a bottle."

It was a bottle.

Wading up to it, he grasped an ordinary black bottle, which upon a time might have contained port or sherry.

It seemed very light.

A cork was stuffed into the neck, and as it rode on the surface of the water, it could have had nothing but air inside it.

"Only a bottle somebody has shied overboard for a lark," he muttered, being about to throw it away.

He, however was struck with a brilliant idea.

"I'll make a cock-shy of it," he said to himself.

Selecting a prominent piece of rock at the edge of the basin in which he was bathing, he placed the bottle on it.

Then he picked up half-a-dozen of middle-sized pebbles.

The first one he threw at the bottle missed it, but the second caught it plump in the middle, and it fell down cracked in twenty pieces.

"Well shied, sir; good shot indeed, sir!" he exclaimed, exulting over his own prowess, just as if he was applauding the delivery of a ball from "Long on" in a cricket field.

Just at that moment Jack came up and thought Maple had gone mad, but the latter soon stopped the noise he was making when he heard the king's voice.

"What's all this hullabaloo about?" cried Jack; "and what do you mean by leaving the signal station when you're on duty?"

"I wanted a bathe," replied Maple.

"I believe you will be all the sweeter for washing and on that ground I won't say anything more about it," Jack exclaimed with a smile. "But what is that I heard brake? It sounded like glass."

"So it was. I found a bottle and made a cock-shy of it. There is what remains of it."

Jack approached the broken bottle, and the wind gently wafted a piece of paper towards him.

He bent down and seized it between his fingers.

"I say?" he cried; "it's lucky I came up."

"Why?" asked Maple.

"Because it's a message from the sea."

"What's that?"

"Don't you know that very often when a ship is sinking, people will very often write something on a piece of paper, and putting it into a bottle, cork it down and chuck it into the sea, in the expectation of its being washed ashore or picked up by some one?"

"And is that a message?" asked Maple, coming out of the water and basking in the sun to dry himself before putting on his clothes.

Jack was too much absorbed in the perusal of the message to pay him any further attention.

"What is it, Jack? You might tell a fellow," continued Maple, who really felt curious.

"Find out," answered Jack.

Holding the paper in his hand, he hastened back to the castle, to find Harvey.

The latter was lying under a tree in front of the castle, to protect him from the heat, which, being in the middle of the day was very great.

As near as possible the sun was in its meridian.

"What's the shindy, Jack?" asked Harvey, noticing that he was agitated.

"Come inside and I'll tell you," replied Jack.

"Just my luck," muttered Harvey; "I no sooner settle myself down for a snooze, than somebody arouses me. I'm like the old woman in the story, who said she was doomed to be flusterated."

He entered the castle after Jack, singing—

"I feel—I feel—I feel:

I feel like a morning star;

I feel—I feel—I feel—"

"I wish you'd make some allowance for my feelings, Dick, and not be howling that rubbish in my ear," interrupted Jack.

"What's come to your royal highness?" asked Harvey.

"A message from the sea."

"The deuce there has! That's interesting. Let's have it," Harvey exclaimed, adding:

"The most devoted and obedient subject of your august majesty impatiently awaits your pleasure. Speak, oh, king, and don't make any bones about it."

"I'll break your bones, Dick, if you chaff," answered Jack, good-humoredly.

"Start with Maple or send him into the woods to catch a nigger if your majesty is in a savage humor," replied Harvey.

"Do you want to hear the message?"

"Yes. What did I leave my nest under the palm tree for? I'd rigged up a punkah—a beautiful one."

"It's and old door, hung on a branch; have tied a piece of string to it, and can move it up and down, which makes a splendid draught just over one's head."

"I shouldn't have left it, I can assure you, unless I thought urgent affairs of state required my presence in the council chamber. Fire away."

Jack straightened the paper and prepared to read.

CHAPTER VI.

WIDE AWAKE.

THIS was the message from the sea:

"Having come to the conclusion that I might improve my circumstances by emigration, I embarked with my wife and child in the 'Eastern Monarch,' but on gaining the Indian Ocean we encountered bad weather, which ultimately made us a wreck.

"At the time I write, the boats are being lowered, and we are going to seek safety where we may find it.

"This to let my friends in England know how dreadful our situation is. God help us!"

Jack paused, and looked up.

"Well, what is there in that?" inquired Harvey.

"The signature is 'J. Scratchley, late of Highgate, London,'" answered Jack.

"What then?"

"Haven't I told you that I was brought up by a Mr. Scratchley?"

"Ah, I see."

"And Emily, his dear little daughter, is the only girl I ever loved in my life."

"Excuse my forgetfulness," said Harvey. "I remember it now. Of course you were spooney on Emily, and you think that she has been wrecked with her father in the 'Eastern Monarch.' It's as plain as a pikestaff now. But don't fret. She's somewhere about. No doubt she's saved."

"I don't know," replied Jack, with a shake of the head.

"Oh, yes; she is. It's better than if she'd 'gone to Brigham Young, a mormonite to be.'"

"I'll tell you what I fancy," continued Jack. "fancy Emily is that girl that Hunston's savages spoke about. It's my firm impression that she is on one of those islands."

"Shouldn't wonder," answered Harvey, after thinking a moment. "It's very likely; and if it is Emily, won't it be jolly to save her?"

"She must be getting a big girl now. Who'd have thought old Scratchley would have emigrated?"

"Who'd have thought of Mole going to China."

"True," said Jack. "It's a curious world; so full of changes. We never know one year where we shall be next."

"Was this letter corked up in a bottle?"

"Yes."

"What's the date?"

"It isn't dated. I suppose Scratchley was too much flurried to think of dates; and if it were it wouldn't help us, for I don't really know the day of the week or the month of the year. I can only guess at them."

"What's the odds, so long as you're happy?" said Harvey.

"I am not happy," answered Jack. "I don't mind being here because I've got you, and it's always jolly to have a friend. Robinson Crusoe is all very well on paper, but in reality it becomes tiresome when it goes on too long. I must rescue Emily."

"She's getting a big girl by this time," observed Harvey.

"Yes; and I'm a big boy. Within the last few weeks I feel as if I had become a man, Dick."

"So do I. Being in one's own house makes one feel manly."

"What's that?" cried Jack, suddenly.

"What?"

"Hush!" Jack continued, putting his finger to his lips; adding as he lowered his voice to a whisper: "There is some one in the bushes to the left. Keep a sharp lookout. I'll go and fox him."

In a moment Jack had glided away.

Before Harvey had recovered from his astonishment, he had disappeared.

Five minutes had elapsed. It was an age to Harvey. Then Jack returned.

"That's worth something," he exclaimed. "I've found out what's going on. Wasn't there a cove in ancient history who had a hundred eyes?"

"Argus. Mythological sort of buffer," replied Harvey.

"That's the man. Well, one ought to be like him to keep one's head on one's shoulders. What do you think? You'll never guess."

"I shan't try. Put me out of misery at once," answered Harvey.

"I saw Maple talking to Hunston."

"No!"

"I did, though, and no flies," replied Jack.

"You should say mosquitoes. Mosquitoes are the customers one meets here," remarked Harvey.

"It's all the same. A 'muskeeter' is only a big, overgrown, stinging sort of fly. But listen to me. Maple has been talking to Hunston, and he has agreed to betray us."

"Did you hear that?"

"Yes; I was just in time. If I'd had my gun, I do think I should have felt justified in peppering Mr. Hunston."

"The brute!" said Harvey.

"There's to be a night attack," continued Jack.

"When?"

"To-night. Maple is to ask us to be on guard, and to kill the dog. Then the niggers, led by Hunston, are to come up and tomahawk us."

"A very neat arrangement."

"Isn't it? Fortunately we are wide awake, and they've got to spell 'able' before they do it."

"It doesn't matter so much now we know what their little game is," said Harvey. "Because we can choke them off if they don't surprise us."

"I don't mean that enterprising young nigger Keyali. I told you of, to have my head," replied Jack.

"And he shan't have mine. Not much. I guess we shall be too many for them."

"Rather. Just a few," answered Jack. "Still it is well to know what we've got to expect."

"We ought to have started Maple when we kicked Hunston out."

"So we ought. They always did hang together."

"What a reptile he is," Harvey observed.

"Reptile. He's worse than that. I'd rather make a friend of a boa constrictor than of him," replied Jack, indignantly.

"What shall we do with him? Drown him like a kitten, or kill him with a back hander like a rabbit?"

"Neither one nor the other. When we are attacked he is to go over to the enemy with as many loaded guns as he can carry. He knows where the loaded guns are. We will change the position, and put some empty ones there."

"That's not bad, but he ought to be done something to," said Harvey.

"Wait till the battle begins. The savages will think their guns, stolen by Maple, are loaded, and they will advance pluckily. You'll see Maple and Hunston among them, and if I get a cool shot at either of them, I shall think I'm justified in pulling the trigger."

"I should think you would too," said Harvey.

"We shall kill the whole boiling of them, and a good job it will be. It's very hard we can't be left alone. We're not interfering with anyone. However, they'll get it hot this journey, or I'm very much mistaken."

Presently Maple came up, looking rather sheepish.

"Hullo, Maple, what's the row?" asked Harvey.

"I'm all right," replied Maple, "bar the heat. This country takes it out of a fellow, and makes him want to sleep half his time."

"Oh! I thought you'd seen somebody?"

"I haven't seen anybody, and don't want to."

"Don't stand there jawing. Go and do something," exclaimed Harvey. "What do you suppose we keep you for?"

Maple slunk away, and pretended to busy himself in some way.

"It'll soon be over," he said to himself. "They don't know as much as I do."

And he chuckled quietly.

In the afternoon Jack placed some empty guns where loaded ones had been, and transferred the latter to another spot.

He and Harvey did not appear to have any idea of what was going on, and treated Maple just as they had done before.

This threw the latter off his guard.

Jack was on guard, but he lay down, and Maple thought he was asleep.

Taking advantage of his apparent slumber, he removed the guns and put them under a tree in the clearing.

All this was observed by Jack.

It was about twelve o'clock when Maple disappeared altogether.

Jack rose and touched Harvey on the shoulder.

"Now for it," he exclaimed.

"Are they here?" asked Harvey, who, in accordance with their arrangements, had been having a nap.

"I don't think they are far off. Wake up Maple's stepped it."

"Are the guns gone?"

"Yes."

"I'm ready," said Harvey. "Give us your hand, Jack. Think of me if I'm picked off."

"God bless you, Dick. If you die, I shall lose the only friend I ever had," answered Jack, whose eyes were moist with tears.

"I can say the same. But I say, this won't do. You're blubbing, and so am I. Suppose you turn the cock on in another direction. Let's have a drop of something."

Jack produced a bottle of brandy, and they both took a sip.

Nero began to growl.

"The dog's growling," exclaimed Harvey.

"Then they're coming. Look out. The loaded guns are in that corner. I have made two loopholes, one on each side of the door. You take one. I'll take the other."

"Right you are," replied Harvey, who was freshened up by the brandy.

"Cover your man before you fire. There are a dozen of them, besides Hunston and Maple."

"They've got nothing but spears," exclaimed Harvey. "They're not worth their salt as fighting men against us."

All at once the dog gave a moan.

Jack peeped out, and saw him lying on his side.

It was evident that he had been killed by an arrow.

Setting his teeth together, Jack said:

"Stand close, Dick. They've killed the dog. There is just light enough to enable us to see the dark-skinned brutes. It's their lives or ours."

"So it is," replied Harvey. "I don't like the idea of shooting any one, but it's their lookout, and not ours. We don't attack them."

As he spoke, a troop of dusky savages emerged from the trees that skirted the clearing, and approached the castle.

The natives, with Hunston, walked behind Maple who was some yards in front.

Jack sank on the ground, and simulated sleep again.

"Jack—Jack, old man," said Maple.

There was no answer.

"I say, Jack," continued Maple.

Still no answer.

Maple retired.

"It's all right. They're both asleep, and I've stolen the guns," Jack heard him say.

Then Hunston spoke to the Tuan Biza, and the natives, in obedience to a sign, again advanced.

"Now, Dick, let 'em have it. Remember it's us or them. Aim low," whispered Jack.

In an instant a couple of reports were heard.

These were followed by another and another in quick succession.

Loud cries arose on every side.

All was darkness and confusion.

The defenders of the castle continued to fire as rapidly as they were able.

It must be acknowledged that Hunston displayed great courage.

His voice could be heard incessantly urging the savages whom he had led against his former friends, and when he found that the guns Maple had supplied them with would not go off, his rage knew no bounds.

The defenders of the castle kept up a steady fire. Such weapons as the natives possessed were of no use against the walls of the castle.

Seeing his companions falling around him, the Tuan Biza gave the order to advance in a body, and storm the castle.

This was what Jack was waiting for.

With his own hands he pulled the string connected with the battery of firearms.

There was the report of a volley of musketry, loud cries followed the discharge, and then there was a solemn stillness, which intimated that the attacking party had either all perished, or had thought it advisable to beat a retreat.

Jack was completely victorious.

He did not, however, cease his vigilance—for it was impossible to tell what plans the savages might have made.

They might have had reinforcements, or be meditating an attack in another quarter.

So two weary hours passed, and then the much longed-for daylight came.

Neither Jack nor Harvey had made more than a passing remark occasionally.

Now they joined one another, and cautiously ventured outside.

Their victory had been more complete than even they had anticipated.

Eleven dead bodies lay upon the ground.

First of all they passed the dog, which had been killed at an early part of the engagement, and Jack said:

"Poor Nero!"

Ten of the bodies were these of fine, handsome, full-grown natives.

The eleventh was a white.

Passing in front of the corpse, Jack said sorrowfully: "He has brought it upon himself. In the confusion and the darkness, I cannot say whether you or I caused his death, Dick."

It was Maple.

The boy was lying on his back, and a tranquil expression sat upon his features, as if death had been instantaneous, which perhaps it was, there being a wound in the region of the heart, through which the bullet probably passed.

"Poor little beggar," remarked Harvey. "I'm sorry he's gone. It makes one feel lonely, though I can't say I really liked him. He never did anything to deserve pity at our hands."

"Still," said Jack, "it's one more gone. We were five when we were cast on this island. Mole was the first to go, then Hunston left us, and now Maple is dead."

"He'd have killed us, Jack, if he had won the fight."

"So he would, but I would rather Hunston had been killed. Maple was led by him."

"Not always. Maple had a wick mind, though, as he's gone, I won't say anything against him. If you look at the matter in the light I do, you will think that it's a good thing we are left to ourselves. It strikes me we shall get on better."

"You and I, Dick, could jog along anywhere; we were made to run together in double harness."

"There, don't fret any more about Maple," replied Harvey. "He was killed in a fair fight, and deserved his fate; for a more treacherous trick than to steal our guns, was never thought of."

"He and Hunston arranged it; by the way, I suppose Hunston has got off clear with the Tuan Biza. I don't see the chief among the slain."

"We have killed nearly all of them—that's a comfort," Harvey remarked.

"After what has happened, Hunston will never come back to us," Jack said. "He'll go over to the Tuan Biza's island and perhaps organize a fresh expedition against us."

"I can't understand two English fellows like Hunston and Maple fighting against their own friends," Harvey said. "It licks me altogether."

"I've been thinking about it," replied Jack: "and it seems to me that when a man gives way to his bitter thoughts and passions, ever so little, he opens the door to temptation, and he goes on doing low and dirty things till it becomes a habit with him, and he doesn't know when to stop."

"There's a good deal of truth in that; a fellow becomes a villain by degrees, not all at once."

"Examine the history of a thief," continued Jack, "and you will find that he has been bad in other things, before he brought himself to steal. People are not born bad. It's giving way to temper, idleness, and one's passion, and being self-willed, that does it; but I don't want to preach a sermon. Maple's dead, and we must bury him decently, as well as those others."

"Better dig a trench for the natives," Harvey suggested.

"Very well," answered Jack, "and give Maple a grave by himself. Fancy, Dick, our having killed all those. It seems very dreadful, doesn't it?"

"Killing's no murder in self-defense. We didn't begin the row. Take a spade and make a start. I'll wire in on this side and meet you half-way."

They selected a sequestered spot some little distance from the castle, and in about four hours had dug a trench sufficiently deep to bury the natives in.

Reverently they placed the bodies in the hole and covered them up with the soil, for they knew that all, whether Christian or savage, go, after death, to meet their Creator.

Their next care was to bury Maple, which they did in a green spot, on which the sunshine played, and around which the birds sang and sported.

Neither Jack nor Harvey said anything, but they both cried heartily as they laid the little fellow's body in the grave.

They were not ashamed of their tears.

Nor had they any reason to be so.

We like a boy or a man either, for that matter, to be able to shed a tear when there is occasion for it.

It shows that he's got a heart and not a bit of stone in his bosom.

When the last sod had been beaten down, Jack fell on his knees and said something in a low voice.

Harvey did not hear every word, but he knew that it was a prayer.

When Jack had done, Dick said slowly:

"Amen."

All the rest of that day Jack was busy carving a little cross, which he placed at the head of the grave.

As they went away after performing their last office of respect for the memory of the dead, Jack's eyes moistened again.

He seized Harvey's hand, and wringing it, exclaimed: "I can't help it, Dick. I know I'm an old fool; but I thought I should make a decent man of him some day if I could only get him away from Hunston's influence."

"When sow's ears make silk purses, then"—began Harvey.

"I know all that," interrupted Jack. "Perhaps you're right. Let's talk about something else. Come for a stroll; we are safe enough now. The savages have had enough to last them some time, and they won't bother us again, I'll bet."

"I don't like to leave the castle," replied Harvey.

"There's no danger. I think we have killed the lot with the exception of Tuan Biza and Hunston."

"The very two I should have liked to see fall."

"Yes, they are the ones who are likely to give us future trouble," replied Jack.

As they went along they remarked that the volcanic mountain was in a state of agitation.

On the southwest side, about one-fourth of the distance from its summit, was a deep, wide gulf.

Out of this arose thick opaque clouds of white gas, which in the still, clear air, was seen rolling gradually upwards in one gigantic, expanding column to the sky.

On its top were thin, veil-like clouds, which occasionally gathered and then slowly floated away, dissolving into the pure ether.

These cloud masses were chiefly composed of steam and sulphuric acid gas.

As they poured out they indicated what an active laboratory nature had deep within the bowels of this old volcano.

"Look out, Jack?" cried Harvey, all at once.

In a moment Jack raised his gun to his shoulder.

"What is it?" he exclaimed.

"I don't know exactly, but unless I am going to fancy things, I could swear I saw a nigger in the bush."

As he spoke a native emerged from his concealment in the jungle.

He advanced on his hands and knees in token of submission, and finding that no harm was done him, he stood upright in a submissive attitude.

Of middle height, the fellow had a good-humored, ingenuous countenance, though he appeared to have suffered recently from hunger.

His only clothing, was the inner strip of the bark of a tree, beaten with stones, until it looked very much like rough white paper, and which we have described as being peculiar to these islands.

It passed round the waist, and covered the loins in such a way, that one end hung down as far as the knee.

He was unarmed, and Jack refrained from firing at him as he did not seem as if he had the slightest intention of harming them.

"Take care," said Harvey, as he saw Jack lower his gun; perhaps there are more behind, and it's only a dodge."

"I don't think so. You keep guard, while I make signs and try to find out what his game is."

CHAPTER VII.

MONDAY.

THE native went through a performance which, as Jack said, would have puzzled a deaf and dumb man.

It was clear that the signs he made were intended to convey to the boys that he claimed their protection, and would be their servant.

The native climbed up a tree, and bringing down fruit, placed it at Jack's feet, kneeling before the boys; and taking Harvey's hand, he struck himself on the head with it, meaning he would not resent a blow.

Then he pointed to the sea with every expression of horror, as if his enemies were in boats.

"It's quite a pantomime," remarked Harvey.

"Now Maple's gone we shall want some one to drudge about. Suppose we enlist Mr. What-d'ye-call-him."

"Old Bob Crusoe had his man, and he called him Friday. I vote we christen Thingamagig there Monday. I like Mondays. We used to get our pocket-money at Crawcour's on a Monday. And he sang:

"He had a man Friday
To keep his house tidy;
Fortunate Robinson Crusoe I

Or we might say:

"It happened one day,
We came across Monday;
* * *

Finish the verse for me, Jack. I was never good at poetry."

"I couldn't finish it, if you paid me for it," replied Jack. "But I'll bet a pound of snuff, that this will turn out an honest fellow."

While they were talking, the native appeared very anxious, as if he thought they meant to kill him.

Jack, however, took him by the hand, and shook it, giving him to understand by a variety of signs that they would do him no harm.

They led him back to the castle and fed him on such food as they had ready to hand, which he seemed to like very much.

Jack showed him how to do various things, and he evinced an aptitude and willingness that made him a valuable acquaintance.

He began to learn English, and acquired a great proficiency in a short time, being singularly quick.

If he once heard a word and was given its meaning, he never forgot it, and would repeat it over again to himself to impress it on his memory.

Monday was not more than two-and-twenty, strong and healthy and not bad-looking, for one of his people.

It was to Jack that he attached himself more than Harvey, though he liked both and obeyed orders from each.

Still he was more Jack's man than Harvey's if any distinction could be fairly drawn.

Both the boys used to take the greatest interest in teaching him their own language, to which they devoted several hours each day.

Of course, when he knew English, he would be of more use to them and a better companion.

Fully three months passed.

Their corn and their potatoes came up and were gathered into the warehouse in the castle, before the rainy season began.

Nothing had been seen or heard of Hunston.

Whether he was alive or dead they did not know.

But Jack had made a tour of the island which took him three days, and he saw no signs anywhere of other occurrences than themselves.

The grass was growing green and waving over Maple's grave.

Both Hunston and Maple were in a measure forgotten.

At length Monday began to talk.

His English was broken and imperfect, as is generally the case with those who are commencing to learn a language, for it takes time to make one's self proficient in the moods, tenses, etc., of a strange tongue.

However he spoke well enough to enable Jack to understand him.

This is in effect what he said:

About twenty-four miles off, or six hours sail, there were two islands not more than one hour's sail from each other.

One was called Ship Island, which was the one Hunston had heard of from the Tuan Biza.

The other was named Limbi.

From this one Monday came. In his own country his name was Matabella, but he was quite reconciled to the name given him, and even seemed rather flattered at it.

The inhabitants of the two islands were pretty nearly equal in point of numbers, and they were all head-hunters.

They continually made war upon one another.

The victorious party always ate its captives, and generally in fine weather, made a voyage to another neighboring island, and had a sort of picnic.

"Lively amusement," remarked Jack to Harvey, as Monday was proceeding with his recital.

"Nice neighbors," answered Harvey.

Once, Monday said, a Hukam Tua, or a missionary, as far as Jack could make him out, came to Limbi in a ship.

The day after his arrival the natives killed and ate him.

"Did you have a bit?" asked Harvey.

"Yes," replied Monday; "me have bit. Hukam Tua good, fat, much nice, Monday eat him up quick."

"You cannibal beast, I shall never like you again," cried Harvey, turning away in disgust and loathing, which the horrid confession was quite calculated to produce in the breast of an European.

Monday saw the expression of his face.

"No eat mans now," he said hastily. "Monday know better, and never more eat up mans. No; never—no."

The poor fellow kept on saying this until Harvey told him he forgave him, because in those days he did not know any better.

"Are you sure you won't wake up some night and make a meal of me?" asked Harvey.

Monday said there was no chance of that. The teaching he had received and the affection he had for his masters, would prevent him from doing anything of that sort.

Some little time after this conversation Jack thought of a question which he wished to put to Monday.

From what Hunston had told him of the remarks of Tuan Biza and from the letter in the bottle that Maple had picked up, he fancied his dear old friend Emily was a captive in the hands of the savages.

The latter was signed by Mr. Scratchley of Highgate, and it wasn't likely that there would be two people of that name.

Nor was it surprising that a scheming, unscrupulous man like Scratchley should make up his mind to emigrate.

Thousands of people do the same thing every year.

"If then, Mr. Scratchley, his wife and child didn't remain on board the 'Eastern Monarch,' when she was deserted, it was fair to suppose that they escaped in the boats."

Still there was a stretch of the imagination on Jack's part in supposing that the girl in captivity, of whom the chief had told Hunston, was Emily.

Nevertheless, Jack had got hold of the idea, and when, as he said, "he got a thing fixed in his nut, it wasn't easy to get it out again."

So he took Monday on one side and said:

"Did you hear in your country of an English girl being shut up?"

He did not say in captivity, or use any long words, because he thought they would be beyond Monday's comprehension.

For this reason he always used as plain language as he could pitch upon.

"Not my country," answered Monday; "on Ship Island, a girl; that's why call Ship Island."

"Oh, indeed," said Jack; "then on Ship Island they have got a girl from an English vessel?"

"Yes," answered Monday, nodding his head up and down.

"How do you know this?"

"Oh, I hear from one my people who go there to make war. We beat them last time, though they take me and one more, and carry over here to eat."

"Which are the best warriors, your people or the other Islanders?"

"Sometimes one, sometimes another. It's not always one," answered Monday.

"I should like to go to your natives and help them to make war, and save this English girl," continued Jack.

Monday's countenance brightened.

"Come, come," he cried, "You shoot your powder shot, you kill all, and we never have no more war."

As he spoke, he danced round and round in a sort of ecstasy.

"But I thought your people liked war," said Jack.

"Me teach them better. If no one make no war on them, then my people no more war," said Monday.

"Do you think we could build a boat and go over to your country?"

"Oh, yes; me build boat."

Jack knew that the natives could build boats.

They have no iron, and therefore, the whole boat is made of wood; but it is not the less sea-worthy on that account.

The central part is low, and the bow and stern curve up high.

These boats generally resembled those used in the South Sea.

"Give Monday axe," exclaimed the faithful fellow.

"He soon make boat, but"—and his face assumed a sorrowful expression—"no send Monday away. Save Monday's life. Kill Monday if you part him."

By which he meant to say that he should die if Jack sent him away.

"I won't part with you," answered Jack, "so long as you do as I tell you. But I want to go to your island and make friends with your chief."

"Why make friends?"

"Will they not thank me for being kind to you?"

"Oh, yes! Much thank. You be great chief."

"Very well. I will lead them against their enemies, and we will rescue the English girl," said Jack.

It was annoying to him to think that Emily, if it was she, should be amongst the natives with whom he supposed Hunston had gone to live.

Sending Monday about his business, he sought Harvey, who was having what he called "a jolly," that is, he was lying on his back under a tree, and sipping a drink he had made through a straw, while he read a book.

"Dick," cried Jack, "we're going to build a boat."

"Bully for you!" answered Harvey.

"And we're going over to Monday's savages, and intend trying to make them fight Hunston, and rescue English girl."

"Good again. I'm one."

"It's worrying me to that Emily may be in the power of Hunston and Tuan Biza."

"Gall and wormwood, as the novels say," remarked Harvey.

"What do you say to it?" continued Jack.

"I like the idea much," replied Harvey. "To tell the truth, this sort of life is all very well for a month or two, but it gets very wearing after a bit. I'd do anything for a dust up."

"All right. Help us to make the boat."

"Like a shot. Is Monday a naval architect?"

"He says so," replied Jack.

His accomplishments come out one by one. First of all he knows how to cook and eat a human being, next he learns English, then he builds boats. Monday's developing. It's a good dodge in a wild and unknown island, to have a tame nigger."

Jack smiled.

That afternoon they commenced building the boat, in which they were to make the adventurous voyage which had for its object the rescue of the girl Jack supposed to be Emily.

Whether he was right or not we shall soon see.

CHAPTER VIII.

BUILDING A BOAT.

THE arrival of Monday proved very valuable to the boys.

He grew very much attached to them.

They could both sleep at night, for the young savage soon learnt to load and fire a gun, and kept watch while his masters slept.

His progress in learning English was very quick, and showed him to be sharp and clever.

The project of building a boat proceeded satisfactorily.

Monday had helped to make boats on his own island of Limbi.

Selecting a spot near the sea, he set to work.

The trees in the tropics grow for centuries, and then fall down from decay, literally dying from old age.

A constant source of danger in these regions arises

from falling trees, which topple down without any warning.

Choosing a mighty tree which had just fallen, Monday began to hollow out the trunk.

It was a work that took some time.

Monday called this species of boat a "leper-leper," though in the far west it would be spoken of as a "dug-out."

When the tree was sufficiently hollowed pieces of plank were placed on the sides to raise them to the proper height.

Both sides are sharp and curve upwards.

About four feet from the bow a pole is laid across, and another the same distance from the stern.

These project outward from the sides of the boat, and to them is fastened a bamboo, the whole forming what is known as an outrigger.

This is necessary, because the canoes are narrow and crank.

Monday declared that with a small triangular sail and a paddle he could manage a leper-leper in the fiercest storm.

Jack's inventive genius supplied a rudder, of the use of which Monday seemed profoundly ignorant.

It was rare fun for the boys when at work, singing, laughing, and talking.

They kept up their spirits in spite of the danger that surrounded them and their lonely position.

Imagine them on the skirts of the thick woods, where troops of large black monkeys kept up a perpetual hooting or trumpeting.

Their cries resembled a score of amateurs practicing on trombones.

Sometimes the din they made was quite deafening, and Jack could not hear himself speak.

Then he fired his gun amongst them, and they scampered off, their chattering ceasing for a time.

But they would return, as if they took a curious interest in what was going on, and rather liked boat-building than otherwise.

Both Jack and Harvey were rather sorry at the idea of leaving the island.

Their corn and potatoes were got in, and the castle had become quite a dear spot to them.

"It's no use grumbling," remarked Jack. "We must go some time or other, and if we don't like Monday's friends, we can come back here again."

"I know what is driving you on, Jack," exclaimed Harvey.

"What?"

"A wish to rescue Emily, if it should, indeed, be your little friend who is in the hands of the savages."

"I don't mind owning it," answered Jack. "Fancy Emily in the power of the head-hunters, and the indignities she may be daily and hourly subjected to."

"Hunston is with the savages, and he would protect her."

"Would he?" said Jack, angrily. "That's all you know about Master Hunston. He is much more likely to add to her worries."

"Why?"

"Because Emmy is a pretty girl, and Hunston's got an eye for a handsome face."

"Well," replied Harvey, "I am game to go anywhere with you, and if there's any fighting to be done, old boy, I shan't shirk my share of it, as you know."

"Give us your fist, old fellow; you're a trump," said Jack.

The boys shook hands, and no more was said about Emily just then, for Jack's eyes filled with tears, and Harvey saw that he felt deeply about the matter.

Jack had an additional reason for leaving the island.

He never knew at what moment Hunston and Tuan Biza might sweep down upon them with an overwhelming force.

That the chief would wish to revenge the death of his comrades who had perished in the attack upon the castle, there was no doubt.

A second assault might be more successful.

What were three people against perhaps a hundred.

In the island of Limbi with Monday's friends, they would be safe.

There was just as much a chance of a ship passing by Limbi as there was of one approaching Harkaway Island.

So it was resolved to abandon the castle, for a time at least.

According to Monday's account, Limbi was only about twenty English miles off.

Not a very formidable voyage after all.

They had scoured Harkaway Island from one end to the other, by making a circuit round it, and they had satisfied themselves that Hunston and Tuan Biza had quitted it.

The island upon which Tuan Biza and his followers lived was visible from Limbi, and had the name of Pisang.

Limbi and Pisang were always at war.

In the last battle between the rival tribes, the Limbians had been surprised, and Monday was captured.

But Monday said:

"We much fight, and more win than the Pisangs. Next time we take plenty Pisangs and cut off their heads."

"You won't cut off heads and eat your enemies any more, will you?" asked Jack, looking crossly at him.

"Not me. Monday no cut and eat," replied the poor fellow. "My people not know what you told me about the Bible, and that it wrong to eat man flesh. Monday tell them all and then they must change, alter."

"We'll wake up the Pisangs or whatever they call themselves," observed Harvey.

"Yes," replied Jack, "we shall have to go on the war-path for Emily's sake."

"We'll lick 'em into eternal smash," replied Harvey, loudly. "I should like to see the half-dozen niggers that can stand against one pure-born Britisher."

Jack laughed.

"You may laugh," continued Harvey. "But there's

something about an Englishman that scares a nigger and a Frenchman. I suppose it's our roast beef."

"Not much of that here," Jack said.

"That's the worst of this outlandish hole," Harvey replied, "you can't get your proper grub. If ever we are licked, I shall put it down to that."

"So I would, Dick."

"It's a theory of mine that a man ought to have his proper grub," Harvey said, sagely. "Do we ever have puddings? Have we seen a cow, dead or alive, since we landed?"

"I've seen a calf," remarked Jack.

"Jack, who's your friend?" demanded Harvey.

"You are, I hope."

"Then don't run the risk of losing him through idle chaff. You called me a calf. Veal's all very well in its way, but to call me a calf, and before Monday, too. It's lowering the dignity of your lieutenant."

"I apologize, Dick. It shan't occur again," Jack said, anxious to soothe his friend's wounded vanity.

"I accept the apology, but it wasn't kind," Harvey answered, becoming good-humored again. "Let's see, as the blind man said, what were we talking about?"

"Grub."

"So we were. Now I'll tell you what I should like to have a turn at, that's tripe and onions. Oh, my! fancy a go in at tripe, Jack?"

"I can't fancy anything half so beastly in this hot climate," replied Jack; "and I am surprised at your vulgar tastes. Mark that poll parrot. There he goes—flying over our heads. Mark I mark!"

"He's settled. I see him."

"So do I," answered Jack, as he fired.

"Monday will stew the bird with a clove of garlic. That will beat all the tripe in Whitechapel," said Jack.

"Never mind," said Harvey with a grave shake of the head. "Parrot's are not bad, but I'll stick out for stewed eels and tripe."

"What next will you want?" asked Jack, adding—"I wish you'd be more like the sailor's parrot."

"What did he do?"

"He didn't talk much, but he was a beggar to think."

"Thank you," said Harvey, biting his lip. "Sorry I spoke; but I'm much obliged to your majesty, and I'll not forget you."

The boat was nearly finished.

All that remained to be done was to step the mast, and rig a sail, the rudder being already shipped.

Monday was digging a channel in the sand to float her.

In appearance the boat was not exactly handsome, but she was very long and deep.

It was Jack's intention to load her with all sorts of stores almost up to the gunwale, as he knew that guns, powder, and bullets, would be of the greatest use to him and the savages with whom, through Monday's influence, he hoped to make friends.

Provision did not matter so much, as the natives were known to be good hunters; but a case or two of spirits would not be unacceptable, he thought, to the chief and his principal advisers.

Jack turned away from Harvey, and watched Monday as he was digging.

Each spade-ful he cast up glittered strangely in the sun.

Peering more curiously into the sandy mixture, he stooped down, and took up some in his hand.

Then he blew away the lighter particles, and there remained some golden dust, among which were a few large rugged lumps about the size of a small pea.

"What have you got there, Jack?" inquired Harvey.

"Gold," replied Jack, quietly.

"Nonsense."

"If I haven't, I'm a Dutchman," Jack exclaimed.

Harvey approached nearer, and looked wonderingly at the auriferous particles.

"Well," he ejaculated, "that's the greatest luck out. Fancy finding gold here."

"Why not?" said Jack. "We're in the land of romance, my boy, and if I found a diamond as big as a pigeon's egg, I shouldn't be surprised; though, to tell you the truth, I never thought there was gold here, but I have heard the sailors say that the natives of these islands trade in gold dust."

"I say, Monday," cried Harvey.

"What now, Mast' Harvey?" asked the black.

"Have you ever seen this stuff before?"

He showed him some of the glittering ore, which he took from Jack's hand.

Monday looked at it carefully before he replied.

CHAPTER IX.

THE VALLEY OF DEATH.

"Oh, yes," answered Monday, after a moment's examination. "It's gold. We find much like this and sell. We make things for the nose and ears."

"Rings?"

"Yes, rings. Plenty stuff like that. We think nothing," said Monday, in a tone of indifference.

"They wouldn't say that in Europe," remarked Jack.

"Not exactly," answered Harvey. "It wants washing and sifting; but its my opinion one might make a very tidy little fortune out of this island."

It is a fact that gold is found in the western and southern parts of Borneo, as well as in Luzon and the Philippines, and in the peninsula of Celebes.

The gold is bought and sold in the form of dust, as the natives do not understand the art of coining.

"We have no time to spare to collect it," said Jack, looking wistfully at the beautiful golden grains in his hand.

"It's all very well for you to talk like that, Jack," exclaimed Harvey.

"Why?"

"You are rich, and your giv's got lots of tin, while

mine is poor, and it's a scramble at home often enough among the kids for the potato skins."

"You can get some if you like."

"I do like, if your majesty will graciously condescend to finish the boat and give me a day or two's holiday. I'll just roam about this island, and see if I can turn up a nugget."

"You won't do that. Gold is only deposited in the shape of dust in these islands," Jack replied.

"All right. I'll have a go in and chance it. I want to make a pile, and when I've got a belt full, I'll cry a 'go,' as they say at cribbage."

"Cut along at once, then, Dick. I'll see to the boat, and dodge that up all serene, for I want to be off at once."

"At once?" asked Harvey, who saw that Jack's manner was urgent.

"Oh, I don't suppose that a day or two will make much difference, but I'm anxious. It's some time now since Hunston hooked it off with the Tuan Biza, and he'll be back again without letting the grass grow under his feet."

"He can't hurt us. I wouldn't give a rap of a common for him and his niggers."

After the way in which the blackskins were beaten off in the last attack, Harvey had got into this manner of deriding them.

"You hold them too cheap," exclaimed Jack. "But it doesn't matter. If you must go gold-seeking, go, though you'd get more by raking this dust up."

Harvey would have his own way, however, and, armed with a pistol, in case of accident, he started on his journey.

He fancied that if they found deposits of gold on the sands, they would certainly discover lumps inland.

Jack had given him his opinion on the subject, and, muttering to himself:

"I suppose he'll be back when he's tired of it," went on with his work.

By the evening the boat was ready for launching, and knocking away some supports, Jack and Monday, with a good English hurrah, let her slide into the dock they had dug for her.

This dock communicated with the sea, and all they had to do, when they wanted her to start, was to push her along till they got clear.

Monday said that he knew a break in the coral reef which surrounded the island, through which they could sail.

The next thing to do was to get in the cargo; but, as it was growing late, Jack deferred this till the morrow.

"Where Mast' Harvey?" asked Monday, as he shouldered some tools to take back to the castle.

"Oh! he's up to the castle I should think," answered Jack. "Perhaps he thought we should have returned before this."

"S'pose him got much big gold lump!" cried Monday, with a smile.

"You heard my opinion, Monday. What is your experience?"

"All dust—no much good—no lump. Poor Mast' Harvey! How him grin wrong side of him face!" replied Monday, laughing.

They entered the castle, and Jack was surprised, and not a little alarmed, to see nothing of Harvey, who certainly ought to have returned before this.

Jack's first thought was that the savages had landed again, this time under the command of Hunston. So so, Harvey would fall an easy prey to them, as he was wandering about the island.

"You stop here, Monday," he said, shouldering his rifle, "and I will take a stroll."

"What for you go?" asked Monday.

"I can't make out what has come to Harvey. I must look for him. I don't take kindly to sitting home when a friend may need my services."

"Me go with you?" asked Monday.

"No! Stop at home, and keep a sharp lookout. Shoot at the first darkskin you see!"

Monday was already too well trained to dispute his master's will.

Jack set out alone.

Not knowing in what direction he was likely to find Harvey, he wandered about in much perturbation of spirit.

"I'd rather have my right hand cut off," he muttered, "than any harm should happen to Dick!"

And he was sincere in what he said.

The purest and most romantic friendship existed between the two boys, which had been strengthened by their solitary exile.

He might have walked for half-a-dozen miles in the interior of the island, when he came to a barren plain, which he had never remarked before.

The volcano mountain towered high into the clouds behind him.

Not a shrub or a blade of grass was to be seen on this desolate plain.

Sulphurous gases appeared in the moonlight to arise from fissures and holes in the earth.

The ground was of a pale gray or yellowish color.

Avoiding the steaming gases, Jack walked a little along the valley.

On all sides of him he saw a number of dead animals of various kinds.

Deer, tigers, birds, and even snakes spread their ghastly skeletons upon the ground.

All these had lost their lives in the fatal place. It was a veritable Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Sulphuric acid gas broke out under his feet, and he retreated, half suffocated by the noxious vapor.

That it was which had caused such certain destruction to all the animals he saw lying around him, who had wandered thither.

The soft parts of many of the dead victims, as the skin, muscles, hair or feathers, were entire, but the bones had partially crumbled.

No fabled upas tree could have worked more of swifter desolation.

The smell of the gas which assailed Jack's nostrils was just like the smoke of a common lucifer match when first struck.

It may be readily imagined how dangerous and poisonous it was.

This vapor was generated under the mountain, and when the volcano was not in action, it escaped through the earth as we have described.

Just as Jack was hastily turning round to retrace his steps, a dim object on his right caught his eye.

It had the form of a man, and was stretched out on the ground.

"Can that be Dick?" was the exclamation that involuntarily escaped him.

Making a circuit to avoid a dense volume of gas which came up from a hole, he approached the singular object.

A glance sufficed to show him that it was Harvey.

He was lying on his back, and though breathing, seemed to be perfectly stupefied and insensible.

It was no time for deliberation or hesitating.

Jack himself felt dizzy, and was sure that if he remained long in that dreadful valley he would sink down like his friend, probably to rise no more.

Tightly clenched in Harvey's hand was the end of a large lump of gold.

The glitter of this piece of precious metal had probably attracted him.

Gas might have broken out near him and caused him to fall down half suffocated, for the deadly vapor springs out at all times from all sorts of fissures, and does not steadily emanate from any particular one.

Jack put the gold in his pocket.

It was, from its appearance and weight, worth some hundreds of pounds, and quite a rarity in that region.

At all events he considered it a windfall for Harvey, which would prove most acceptable to him if he should ever return to civilized life again.

It would be hard indeed to lose it after having risked so much to obtain it.

When he had secured the lump of gold, Jack seized Harvey in his arms, and with a desperate exercise of strength, carried him away from the valley.

Several times he stopped and staggered like a drunken man, for the pestilential gas assailed him, and very nearly subdued his energy.

At length the end of the open and blighted space was reached.

Reeling a few yards further, Jack let his friend sink to the ground on the grass, which even here was sparse and stunted.

The blight of the Valley of Death had tainted it.

Now Jack could understand how animals coming into this dreadful space sank down to die.

Now he could imagine birds flying over it compelled to flutter to the earth in deadly agony.

Now he could conceive a horrid serpent, which had crawled to the fatal precinct to enjoy the promised heat, inhaling the poison rising from the earth, and twisting about in useless convolutions.

He always carried a little flask of brandy in his pocket in case of an emergency like the present arising, and he poured a few drops down Harvey's throat.

It stimulated the action of the heart, which was beating slowly.

Presently he opened his eyes, and stared wildly round him.

"Is it you, Jack?" he gasped.

"Yes, Dick. It's all right. Do you feel better?" replied Jack.

"I'm getting better; but I've had a dream. I thought some one was choking me with the smoke of matches. How was it?"

"You went after some gold, didn't you?" said Jack, trying to help his memory.

"That's it. I was going home, as it was getting dark, and I had found nothing, when I saw something glittering in the imperfect light, on a dry-looking plain."

"It was lucky I came up when I did. You could not have lived long there."

"It wasn't more than half an hour ago. I remember picking up the gold. Such a whopping big lump! and then this beastly smoke I tell you about came up. I tried to run, but couldn't; and then I went to sleep, dreaming this horrid dream."

"That is the valley of poison. It is full of deadly gases, and nothing can live long upon it."

"I have heard of such places near the base of volcanoes. But how can I thank you, Jack, for rescuing me?"

"Perhaps you'll have a chance some day of doing as much for me."

"Won't I, that's all! Give us another pull out of the flask, and I shall be as right as a trivet," replied Harvey, who was rapidly regaining his strength.

"I couldn't rest," continued Jack, handing him the brandy, "when I found you did not come home. That there was something wrong, I felt positive."

"You thought the niggers had got me."

"I did."

"By the way," exclaimed Harvey, "where's the bullion? Was it bullion, or was that part of the dream?"

"No, here it is. I collared that at the time I rescued you, and a very tidy-sized lump it is."

Harvey clutched the lump eagerly.

"This is worth running a little risk for. It must be worth a lot," he said, gazing at it with admiration.

"It may lay the foundation of your fortune if ever we get back again to England."

"Tell you what, Jack," said Harvey, "I'll give it to you. After what you've done for me, I ought to think more of my life being saved than what good money will do for me. Take it, old fellow, and my love with it."

Jack was much affected by this proof of his friend's generosity of heart, and liberality.

"Keep it, Dick," he replied, "though I thank you

all the same. As you reminded me this morning, I have plenty. My father's well enough off."

"Won't you have it?"

"No. It's all your own, Dick."

Harvey reluctantly put the gold in his pocket, and, leaning on Jack's arm, they returned to the castle, where the faithful Monday was anxiously awaiting their coming.

From the account Harvey gave of his adventure as they went along, Jack gathered that he had not long been insensible in the valley.

The jet of gas which had assailed him, had darted suddenly out of the earth, and as quickly died away again.

If it had continued, life must have been speedily extinguished.

Those fumes are forever rising and vanishing all over the fatal spot, and sweeping hither and thither in white, dense clouds.

It was a narrow escape, and one for which the companions were both deeply grateful.

That night Harvey did not forget to say his prayers, which he uttered with rather more than his usual earnestness.

A little danger is sometimes a wholesome stimulus to our devotion, and to the proper regulation of our thoughts.

It checks our pride, and makes us remember what helpless creatures we really are.

The next day was occupied in taking stores to the boat.

She was carefully laden, and moored near the signal station, so that all the crew had to do was to jump in, and push off.

The wind being rather high, the boys deferred their departure for a few days.

This delay gave rise to a peril which, though not unexpected, came upon them with all the severity of a surprise.

CHAPTER X.

BURNING OF THE CASTLE.

As we have stated, all was in readiness for the voyage to Limbi.

Jack was only waiting for the wind to rull a little, as he did not deem it prudent to embark in half a gale with a roughly-made and heavily-laden boat.

The stores which they had placed on board were chiefly guns, powder, and shot.

Both Harvey and Jack were sorry to leave the castle, where they had spent some pleasant months; though Maple's death, and Hunston's desertion, with Mr. Mole's sad end, had damped their enjoyment.

Trouble, however, makes people selfish.

They thought a good deal of themselves, and saw the necessity of making some move, unless they wanted to spend their remaining days on the island.

This was not an agreeable prospect to the high-spirited boys, who wished to take their places in the world once more, and rise amongst their fellows.

Monday was delighted at the chance of seeing his friends and relations again.

"My father prince. Much great chief," he said.

"Is he the king of Limbi?" asked Jack.

"Yes; him king. Tuan Biza. Great chief, we call him."

"Will he make us welcome?"

"You save Matabella's life. That me—Monday," replied the black. "He much thank for saving Matabella—him only son."

"What's your governor's name, Monday?" inquired Jack.

"Lanindyer him call."

"That's a nice crackjaw name. I suppose you'll be king some day?"

"No. Make Master Jack king. Monday be him servant, as he is now."

"Oh, so you want me to be your king. All right," replied Jack; "I'll astonish the natives."

"Lead them against Pisang with shot-gun, and make Limbi one big, great peoples, with plenty heads," said Monday.

"I won't have any head-hunting. Drop that idea," said Jack.

Monday looked contrite, and said that he had forgotten for the moment that head-hunting was wrong.

"You no fight. No war where you come from in big canoe?" queried Monday.

"Well, yes, we fight when we're attacked," replied Jack.

"So we do. N^o tack, no fight. Live quiet at Limbi, if Pisang not come take head."

Jack did not care to continue the conversation, because he knew, from what he had read of the history of his own and other countries, that the European nations had waged wars as dreadful as any fought by the savages of the Eastern Archipelago.

"Monday," he cried, "get the guns ready. I am going to have one more ramble over the island before we leave it—perhaps forever."

"Happy have we been, and happy may we be," remarked Harvey. "I like this jolly old place."

"So do I; but it does not do to stagnate and stand still. We must push on, Dick," said Jack.

"So we must, and I wonder where we shall push to at last."

Harvey was in a tearful mood at the prospect of leaving the island; but Jack shouldered the rifle Monday brought him.

"Are you coming?" he said to Harvey.

"Of course I am. You don't think I am going to shirk behind, when there is sport going on," replied the latter. "Give me a gun, you, Monday!"

"Yes," replied the latter, handing him one.

"What did I tell you to call me?" asked Harvey, severely.

"Sare. I forgot, sare."

"No; it wasn't 'sare,' either. It was *sir*. So don't you forget another time, or"—

He lifted his foot threateningly.

Monday grinned, and showed his white, gleaming teeth.

"No kickee, sare. No kickee poor Monday," he cried.

"Well, I won't this time; but I will have proper respect paid to one who was until lately an officer in the British mercantile marine. That licks you, old sharp-shins, doesn't it?"

"Yes. Mast' Harvey, that one lick for me," replied Monday, who only yet imperfectly understood the slang terms of his young masters.

"That's what you may call a lick for the mind, and it's better than a lick on the head," said Harvey, laughing.

Jack now led the way into the interior of the island, but they did not see anything to shoot at.

After walking some distance, they felt tired, and lay down under a spreading palm tree, while Monday knocked down some clusters of the rich, ripe coconuts.

They were filled with a delicious cool water, which was peculiarly grateful to them during the noontide heat.

"We shall get a shot or too when the sun goes down," remarked Jack.

"Everything has gone to sleep now, and I'm going to follow everything's example," replied Harvey.

"You always were a lazy beggar, Dick."

"Why shouldn't I be? I hate taking trouble, and if this climate wouldn't make a fellow lazy, I should like to know what would."

"Monday," exclaimed Jack, "where's the powder flask?"

"Is it him powdare? Monday been and forgot him," answered the black.

"Oh, have you? then you'll have to tramp back to the castle and get it."

"Well, I'm blowed," exclaimed Harvey, "you're a nice young man for a small tea party, up Islington way, I don't think."

"Let him alone; walking to the castle and back will be a sufficient punishment for him without bullying," cried Jack.

Monday did not wait to be told twice; he set off at a jog trot to the castle to repair his forgetfulness.

"How that fellow runs," remarked Harvey. "I couldn't cut out the pace like that if anyone paid me for it."

Without appearing to put himself to any great exertion, Monday could run a mile in about seven or eight minutes.

Half an hour elapsed, during which time the boys remained in the shade.

Then Monday was seen coming up with the wings of the wind.

"It's wonderful. I believe he's going quicker now than when he started."

Monday came up, but with his hands empty: he had no powder, though he had been sent expressly for it.

His manner was agitated, and his breast heaved with exertion.

For some moments he was unable to speak.

"Something's up," observed Harvey.

"Yes, he's had a scare," answered Jack, "he's forced the running to such an extent that he is pumped out—can't find wind enough to speak with."

"Shall I stir him up?"

"If you like."

Harvey gave him a dig in the ribs and a slap on the back.

"Wake up, you imp of blackness," he exclaimed.

"Have you seen your own face in a pool of water, or discovered that there is a strong family likeness between your nose and a parrot's beak? Speak, you sable duffer, and put us out of our misery at once!"

"Oh, Mast' Jack! oh, Mast' Harvey!" was all he could reply.

"Oh, oh!" repeated Harvey. "If you go on like that we shall take you for a West-end swell who has got into debt and 'Oh's' everybody."

"Be quiet, Dick. There's something serious about this," said Jack. "Keep a look out; he may be pursued, or perhaps he's wounded."

Harvey grew grave as this view of the case was presented to him.

It was not at all unlikely that he had seen some of his old enemies, with Hunston at their head.

He waited eagerly for the black to speak, which he did as soon as he could command his voice.

"Oh, sare!" he exclaimed, addressing himself to Jack. "Oh, such a sight! Ten, twenty, hundred Pisang on Island! The Tuan Biza and white man with the strange face, both near the castle."

"He means Hunston," said Harvey.

"No doubt," answered Jack, turning pale, and setting his teeth together, which was a way he had when anything put him out. "Go on, Monday."

"They take much thing out of castle and pile in heap. Many Pisang drink much strong wine, spirit. They sing; they dance."

"Getting drunk, eh?" remarked Harvey. "They've not lost any time over it."

"White man with the fancy face"—continued Monday.

"Fancy face!" repeated Harvey, laughing. "That's not bad. Monday makes shots at his English, but he's hit the mark this time. Hunston's mug is of a fancy character. You might say of it, 'He was all my fancy painted him.'"

"Let Monday speak!" cried Jack, in a rage at his companion's thoughtless interruptions. "We can't afford to lose valuable time with your confounded interruptions."

"All right. I'll subside. Monday proceed," answered Harvey, who never disputed Jack's will.

"White man with the face," continued Monday. "Him take stick from a fire, which some Pisangs make, and throw it into the castle. Soon it all one, much large blaze."

"They've burnt the castle, Dick!" said Jack.

"Blow them!" was all Harvey could say.

"White man take more fire and throw it in the corn," Monday went on. "Soon it all one big smoke, fire. White man do everything. All Pisangs look to him as if he great chief. Oh! how all burn. The Pisangs—they dance, they laugh and drink, and he white man, he much grin like me when I cut off my first head."

It was clear, from Monday's confused account, that Hunston had suddenly landed on the island, with an overwhelming force of savages.

These were buoyed up by the hope of plunder, and burning, no doubt, to have revenge for the death of friends and relatives who had fallen by Jack's rifles in the late attack.

How Hunston felt towards him Jack knew well enough.

Hunston was sufficiently vindictive to wish that Jack had half a dozen lives, that he might take them cruelly, one after the other.

The enemy was on the island.

They were dancing even then round the burning castle.

The corn, upon which the boys had intended to subsist when the ship's provisions were exhausted, was in the flames.

All the havoc and mischief of which savages are capable was accomplished in a few hours.

No wonder a sigh escaped Jack at the distressing news brought him by Monday.

CHAPTER X.

A GHOST FROM THE GRAVE.

"This is bad news," said Harvey, dolefully.

"Not so bad as it might have been, had we been caught napping," replied Jack.

"Fancy our dear old castle being burnt. But after all, it does not matter so much, as we were going to cut our stick and leave it. Hunston does not know that we have our boat ready."

"His plan is to destroy everything we have belonging to us and condemn us to starvation. He would like to see us wandering about with no powder and shot to kill our food or protect us from the wild beasts, and no roof to shelter us—that's his game."

"And a villainous plot it is too."

"So long as our boat is not discovered, it is all right. If they find that, Heaven help us!" said Jack.

"What's that?" cried Harvey.

All listened intently.

A loud noise, coming from the direction of the castle, was heard.

It resembled a clap of distant thunder.

"You remember what I called the magazine?"

"The hole in the warehouse, in which you put the bags of powder?"

"Exactly. After stewing away as much as I could in the boat, there still remained a considerable quantity."

"I see," cried Harvey. "The flames have caught it, and there has been an explosion. What a jolly lark! I hope some of the noble savages have copped it hot."

"So do I, and Hunston into the bargain. You may depend it has done some damage. But now to get off the island. We must make the attempt, wind or no wind."

"I shan't bother myself to sweat about it till the sun goes down," Harvey said with a yawn.

"Be firm, Dick: no foolishness," cried Jack, in a tone of encouragement. "Every hour we stay here is fraught with peril, and though our enemies are savages, we can't afford to despise them, more especially as they are led by Hunston."

"I wish Hunston was afflicted with all the plagues of Egypt. What a nuisance the brute is, bothering us like this."

Turning to Monday, Jack continued:

"What do you say?"

The black had been listening to their conversation attentively.

"Me say go now. No wait for night. When him dark, um boat not go easy through the reef," replied Monday.

"Your opinion and mine are alike," answered Jack. "We will get down to the coast, going as cautiously as we can, and if we meet with the Pisangs, as Monday calls them, we must either show them a clean pair of heels or make the best fight we can."

"I don't like the idea of running away from niggers," replied Harvey.

"Neither do I, but there is no help for it," answered Jack.

"Let us go in Indian file. I'll take the lead. Monday shall be in the middle, and you bring up the rear, Dick."

They started in this order, and walked at a quick pace, in spite of the sun's heat to the sea shore.

Each kept his eyes on the alert, in case of a surprise, and to avoid the castle and the savages they made a considerable circuit.

They reached the boat which was lying in the water, concealed under some rocks, near the place where the boys had first landed and Jack had taken possession of the island in the name of the queen.

He wished now that he had placed the little vessel in another spot, as she was too near Hunston, and his savages to make her builders feel comfortable. As they passed within half a mile of the castle, a thick smoke apprised them of the truth of Monday's story.

Desolation, wrought by fire, reigned in the once happy spot, where the boys might have dwelt peacefully had it not been for Hunston's wicked passions.

Creeching cautiously through the forest, they reached

the skirts and a long tract of rank grass, fringed toward the sea with sand, stretched down to the shore.

Hitherto they had not much cause for apprehension, as the trees in the woods had sheltered them.

But now the case was altered.

If the savages had spread themselves over that part of the island, there was every reason to believe, they might observe the fugitives as they crossed the open space.

"Halt," said Jack, in a low tone.

Harvey joined him, and Monday stood still, scouring the plain with his quick eye.

The explosion, for such it was, had done considerable damage.

Hunston had never been allowed to go into the warehouse, and therefore did not know where the powder was kept.

He had, when the castle was taken possession of, searched everywhere for it.

His hunt had been unsuccessful.

A case of spirits was found, and a cask of wine.

As is usual in such cases, the marauders had all helped themselves to some intoxicating liquors.

Not being accustomed to such strong drinks, the Pisangs became uproarious.

They danced, and sang, and went roaring and bellowing about.

Their leaders were unable to control them.

They yelled for heads, and demanded to be led against Jack and Harvey.

Of Monday's existence they knew nothing.

Hunston's annoyance at not finding the powder was very great.

It is true he had captured a large stand of arms, but the guns were useless without powder.

Suddenly the explosion took place.

The savages were dancing round the burning castle, unsuspecting of danger.

Several were killed when the magazine was blown up.

Hunston was thrown on his back, and much hurt.

His face was getting well, for, to his great joy, he found the dye used by the natives in tattooing him was not lasting.

The marks were gradually dying out.

Every day they grew fainter.

There was a prospect of his recovering his usual appearance in a few months.

The explosion, however, blackened his face and singed his hair, making him look hideous.

Roaring with rage, he rose to his feet, dizzy, and looking unutterably hideous and ferocious.

While Jack was on the lookout, he saw some one crossing the sandy plain between himself and the sea.

"Dick," he exclaimed, "who is that?—his face is white!"

"Blessed if I know. It isn't Hunston; but, as you say, it is a white man," answered Harvey.

"Cover me well with your rifle," continued Jack; "and you, Monday, do the same. Fire if you see me in any danger. I am going to reconnoiter."

He stepped into the open.

"Who goes there?" he exclaimed.

A well-known voice replied:

"A friend."

Jack advanced boldly.

The next moment he was face to face with the intruder.

The latter was tall and gaunt, his hair hung down his neck in tangled locks, his clothes, which were of European cut, were tattered and torn, and his broad-brimmed straw hat had more than one rent in it.

"Why, bless me! it is—and yet it can't be! Is it Mr. Mole?" cried Jack.

"My dear boy!" replied the voice of Mr. Mole. "It is I. No wonder you do not recognize me."

"But I thought you fell down the mountain and perished in the eruption," said Jack, beside himself with amazement.

"I did fall down, but only a little way. Providence was good to me. I climbed up again, but, in seeking to rejoin you, I lost my way, and fell into the hands of the savages."

"It's a wonder they did not have your head."

"I am indebted to Hunston for my life. The savages intended me for a grand sacrifice, but Hunston, who seems to have acquired great influence with the savages, caused them to spare me," replied Mr. Mole.

"And since then?"

"Since then they have made me their slave. I have been a hewer of wood and drawer of water. Truly, my lot was hard."

"Where did they keep you?"

"They took me in a boat to the island of Pisang," said Mr. Mole. "But though absent in the body, in spirit I have been with you."

"Well, this is the most out-and-out extraordinary thing I ever heard of!" cried Jack. "Dash my buttons! I can scarcely believe it. We have been mourning you as dead."

"How are Harvey and Maple?" asked Mr. Mole.

"Dick's all right, and is hiding in the wood. Maple is dead. But am I to regard you as a friend or an enemy?" replied Jack, with a long look of distrust.

"As a friend. It is true that your castle is burnt, and that the island swarms with your enemies, the Pisangs; you will be hunted, even to the death, I fear, yet will not desert you." Isaac Mole's heart is in the right place.

"Things are not quite so dicky as you imagine," Jack said, with a smile.

"Did you know the castle was burnt and that the Pisangs had landed in force?"

"I did."

"You are on your guard?"

"Rather," replied Jack. "I have too much regard for my head to let Hunston steal a march upon me. By the way, how is he?"

Getting better. It was a cruel joke you played him,

and his phiz looked so comical when he came to Pisang that I laughed in derision, whereupon he kicked me—me, Isaac Mole—upon my seat of honor."

"Just like him."

"How did Maple die?"

"You heard of the attack on the castle, which failed?"

"Yes."

"Maple betrayed us and joined the enemy; but this treachery cost him his life."

"He was always of a shifty disposition. I will not let fall a tear to his memory," said Mr. Mole, "nor would I to that of Hunston, should vengeance overtake him, for he hath used me sorely and his kicks rankle in my mind."

"Look here, Mr. Mr. Mole," said Jack. "This is a critical time, but you have always acted like a gentleman, and I esteem you for it."

"Thank you, Harkaway."

"There is my hand on it."

"I grasp it as that of an honest man," said Mr. Mole as they shook hands.

"I can't tell whether you mean to betray us or not. If you try it on, I shall feel no compunction in shooting you like a dog. I am, however, disposed to trust you. You think our position desperate, yet you have offered to join us?"

"Verily, I will cast my lot with you. Hunston is an arrogant upstart. There was over much liquor found in the castle, but to me he denied a drop when I would fain have solaced myself with a gill of brandy; and he allowed his friends, the savages, to wallow in Martell's best and Kinahan's LL whisky, like the swine they are."

"I've got whisky, and I've got powder and shot," said Jack, "so come on."

"Believe me or not," continued Mr. Mole, "it was my intention in seeking you—for I did set forth to seek you—to warn you of your danger, and I thanked heaven when I found you were not at home in the castle."

"It is lucky, perhaps," answered Jack.

"Hunston has promised your head and that of Harvey to the Pisangs, and you are to be killed with great pomp and display."

"When captured," repeated Jack. "It is as well to catch your hare before you think of cooking it. But come on. It is not safe to stand here."

"Lead, Harkaway. I will follow you, for you were always a brave boy. Your country shall be my country, as the Scripture hath it, for truly my spirit is much vexed with over-serving," answered Mr. Mole.

Jack, looking cautiously around to prevent a surprise, led the way back to the wood, where he had left Harvey and the black.

CHAPTER XI.

MR. MOLE'S VALOR.

THE singular meeting between Jack and Mr. Mole was like an incident in a romance.

His story, however, was intelligible enough.

He had struck upon a ledge in the uneven shaft of the crater of the mountain.

By dint of great energy and perseverance he succeeded in reaching the top once more.

Losing his way in trying to retrace his steps to the castle, he had been captured by the Tuan Biza and his band.

The savages would have eventually killed him had not Hunston interposed in his behalf.

For two days before he was captured Mr. Mole had wandered about, lost, subsisting on such fruits as he could find.

Jack had always had a liking for his old master, and he was much pleased to meet with him again.

Harvey was as much surprised to see Mr. Mole as Jack had been.

"Is it a ghost?" he exclaimed. "Can I believe my eyes? Have you come back from the grave, sir?"

"No, my dear Harvey, I have been simply a servitor to a degraded race of negroes. I, the proprietor of a tea-garden in China, have been beaten by them, and made to toil in the fields, while Hunston has amused himself by brutally kicking me," replied Mr. Mole.

He then briefly related his adventures, to which Harvey listened breathlessly.

"What made them bring you here to join in the attack on us?" asked Jack, who could talk more at his ease, while concealed in the dense foliage of the wood.

"I was to be a decoy. I am even now sent out into the woods to find you, and throw you off your guard."

"And you accepted such a post?" said Jack, eyeing him suspiciously.

Harvey grasped his rifle tighter.

"I did, though in my heart I secretly determined to warn you of your danger. It is not supposed that you knew of the landing and what has followed it," answered Mr. Mole.

"Did you see the explosion?"

"I did not. I came up at the sound, and found Hunston, who is much blackened by the powder, cursing like the Pagan he is at the disaster. He has guns in plenty, but no powder."

"Ha! ha!" laughed Jack. "I thought his lordship would be nicely done in that direction."

"Six Pisangs are killed by the explosion and five more wounded. The Tuan Biza raves like a maniac, and his amiable fellows call loudly for heads. What my dear boys, shall you do to avoid the cruel death that menaces you?"

"Step it," replied Jack.

"Whither?"

"Across the wild sea."

"You cannot swim the distance," said Mr. Mole, doubtfully.

"I don't mean to try, but our name is Walker before

CHAPTER XIII.

ESCAPING FROM THE ISLAND.

another hour is over. We meant to hook it to-day, and all our preparations are made."

"Indeed I may I inquire the nature of your conveyance and your destination."

"We have a boat, and we're going to Limbi, that's the name of the crib, isn't it, Monday?" said Jack.

"Him Limbi, saie enuf," answered the black, who had been hidden behind a tree.

"Dear me," exclaimed Mr. Mole, "is that a friendly black? He gave me quite a turn. I thought he was Pisang. They all have a family likeness."

"He is Monday."

"And why Monday?"

"Because we found him on a Saturday," said Jack, laughing.

"That is an absurd reason. I am, however, content to know that he is not an Amalekite, that is to say a Pisang. But I will also make a joke. When you get to Limbi, mind you don't find yourselves in Limbo."

"Not bad for Mole, eh, Dick?" remarked Jack, with a smile.

"He's improving," answered Harvey.

"You may make as many bad puns as you like, sir," exclaimed Jack; "we're too glad to have you amongst us again to find fault with anything you do or say."

"Harkaway, you're a good boy," replied Mr. Mole, much touched with his kindness; "you have placed me under several obligations to you at various times, and I shall esteem it a favor if you can give me to drink a small portion of your spirituous liquor."

"Here's my flask, lay hold, and don't pitch into it too hard," answered Jack.

Mr. Mole snatched it eagerly, and a quick gurgling sound was soon audible.

"The patriarch was right when he said that wine, whereby he meant fermented liquid generally, as well as distillations, gladdens the heart of man," remarked Mr. Mole.

Again he raised the bottle to his lips.

A second time was the gurgling audible.

"Dash my wig," exclaimed Jack, "you'd drink the sea dry, sir, if it was filled with gin and water."

"No water, Harkaway. I abominate adulteration, and will take my stand on pure spirit."

"You won't stand at all, if you don't watch it. Give me my flask. Well, I'll be hanged if it isn't empty," exclaimed Jack, regarding the bottle.

"Now," said Mr. Mole valiantly, "I have courage. Show me the villain Hunston, and give me a sword that I may hew him in pieces."

"Here's a pistol, sir," replied Harvey, handing him a revolver; "mind you shoot straight."

"I am incapable of a crooked action. I hope you believe that I am thoroughly incapable of a crooked action. 'True as steel' is my motto, and I have resolved to defend you poor helpless boys against the savages who are thirsting for your blood," Mr. Mole rejoined.

Harvey laughed.

The late senior master at Pomona House rolled his eyes in a peculiar manner, and staggered a little bit on one side.

"How infinitely superior is the brandy of the Christian," he observed, "to the palm spirit of the savages, in which I indulged deeply this morning on the sly."

"I wish you'd talk less and do more," exclaimed Jack. "Look alive, sir, and just put a stopper on your tongue till we're afloat, then you may jaw for a month if you choose."

Thus rebuked, Mr. Mole was silent.

Jack gave his orders, and soon the little party were engaged in crossing the open space, to gain the boat, which was concealed under the rock about half-a-mile off.

A path led down from the rocks to the seashore, and when the commencement of this was reached, Jack, who led and was some yards in advance, looked below. In an instant he held up his hand.

This was a signal.

Harvey halted and did the same.

Mr. Mole and Monday, who followed, imitated his example.

Each looked to his weapon.

"Monday," observed Mr. Mole, "I perceive that you have attached yourself to the white people, and I trust you are prepared to acquit yourself like a man."

"Monday fight till no use fight no more. Then he run way," replied the black.

"A very sage native upon my word," remarked Mr. Mole. "There is more wisdom in you, Monday, than I thought there was. You mean to do the very thing I had intended to do myself."

"What good one fight twenty? What use um die? No more brandy drink," Monday said, grinning.

"My worthy black creature," Mr. Mole answered gravely, "you are facetious, but you must not make jokes at my expense, or I shall, as my friend Harkaway would put it, be under the painful necessity of tanning your hide, though nature and the hot sun of the tropics have done that pretty effectually already."

"Mast Mole, mind um pistol," exclaimed Monday, as Harvey made a second signal to them to be on the alert.

"Do you think there will be any fighting, my sable friend?" asked Mr. Mole.

"Some Pisangs not far off. Much fight soon."

"Ah, dear me! I perceive a small rocky fissure in the sand. I will step within it. Tell me, my good black-skin, when the fighting is over."

In fact, there happened to be just in front of Mr. Mole an inequality in the ground, which he called a rocky fissure.

It was, however, nothing of the sort.

Jack had dug a hole in the sand to serve as a rifle-pit, from which he could fire at the enemy, and he concealed himself if he should be attacked.

Into this Mr. Mole crept.

He was securely hidden in the hole.

Monday was much incensed at what he considered Mr. Mole's cowardice.

"Sare!" he exclaimed; "you, sare! Come out dat. Won't you help fight? Come out dat hole, sare!"

"Not if I know it, my amiable negro," replied Mr. Mole. "You want this hole yourself, but I've been too quick for you. I shall relinquish this hole to no man breathing. Not much!"

We must now describe what had excited Jack's alarm.

The path in the rock was about five-and-twenty yards in length.

Immediately below lay the boat.

To his surprise he beheld six Pisangs standing near her.

They had evidently not been there long, for they were talking rapidly, and making wild gestures, as if pleased with their discovery.

Two were overhauling the stores, though they did not attempt to remove anything.

If the savages took possession of the boat, Jack knew that his doom was sealed.

It was a time for action.

Retreating a few steps he was joined by Harvey.

"What is it, old fellow?" asked the latter. "You look as if you had found sixpence and lost a shilling."

"The Pisangs have found the boat."

"Nonsense!"

"They have, though," replied Jack.

"How many of them are there down there?"

"Six. Come and look."

"Six!" repeated Harvey. "That's three to one."

"You forget Mole."

"Oh! Mole's an old woman. He don't count. And besides, he's been swigging the natives palm spirit till he's top-heavy, and your brandy will about settle him."

"I wish we hadn't met him. He'll only be in the way. Yet we must not grumble. It will be a charity to get him away from the Tuan Biza and Hunston," said Jack.

The boys approached the edge of the cliff and looked down.

They retreated almost immediately.

One of the Pisangs was ascending the winding path.

"He's going to tell his friends of the find they've made," said Harvey.

"That's just the idea. Stand fast, Dick, and back me up like brick. I don't like taking a man's life, but it's a case with us, if I don't stop this cove."

"We shall all be up a gum tree if he gets away. Shall I tackle him?" replied Harvey.

"No. Leave him to me."

"Shall you shoot?"

Jack replied by drawing a case-knife from its sheath.

"It'll be a rough and tumble, but I shall have the best of it, as he will be taken by surprise. If you see me getting worst off, shoot Dick."

"Never fear."

Harvey laid down on his side, and Jack crawled on his hands and knees to the edge of the cliff, with the knife opened, and held between his teeth.

He did not want to shoot if he could help it, as the noise of the shot would arouse the attention of the main body of the savages.

The messenger must, however, be stopped at all hazards.

Scarcely allowing himself to breathe, Jack crouched as he waited for his enemy.

The inhabitants of Pisang Island had come over under Hunston's leadership to attack him, and were even then searching for him to cut off his head.

Could he be blamed for taking life in self-defense?

A few moments of breathless expectation.

Then a head appeared over the summit of the cliff.

This was followed by the shoulders of the native. Stretching out his arm, Jack threw it round the man's neck.

He drew him forward with a hug like that of a bear.

"How do you find yourself, old boy?" he said, gleefully.

The Pisang turned his eyes upon him, filled with a look of deadly terror.

Jack's grasp tightened.

The native laid on his back.

Disengaging one hand, Jack took the knife from his mouth and plunged it into his body, burying it up to the hilt.

The native made a convulsive spring.

Thinking that all was over, Jack had relaxed his grasp, which allowed the spasmodic effort of the native to jerk his body over the cliff.

He rolled down a corpse.

When the body fell at the feet of his companions they crowded around him, gazing at him with wonder not unmixed with terror.

This passed away, and raising a horrible war whoop, they looked upwards for their enemies.

"I managed that badly," said Jack, "but it can't be helped. Call up Mole and Monday, Dick, and follow my fire."

Selecting the most prominent of the natives, Jack discharged his rifle.

The fellow started forward and fell dead on his face.

The Pisangs began to run.

"Fire, Dick, fire," cried Jack, while he reloaded.

Harvey took a steady aim, and a native fell to the earth biting the sand in his death agony.

By this time Jack was ready to discharge his piece a second time.

A fourth native fell.

Monday came up and also fired his piece, but the two remaining Pisangs, running with incredible celerity, were out of danger.

"Now for it, Dick," exclaimed Jack, "It's no use following those two skunks. We couldn't catch them if we did."

"What shall we do?"

"Get down to the boat and make a start; the wind is still blowing stiffly from the shore, though not so roughly as it did this morning; now then, Monday, down with you; look slippery, Dick. I'll bring up the rear."

"Where's Mole?" asked Harvey.

"Mr. Mole, where are you, sir?" cried Jack, "We're off, come along."

A head appeared above the sand.

"I—I felt a tittle faint, Harkaway," said Mr. Mole in a confused voice. "But I'm all right now."

"Come on then," exclaimed Jack.

Harvey and Monday were already half way down the cliff, slipping down like wild cats.

Jack followed them.

They knew that their lives depended upon their speed.

The Pisangs had come over in boats, and they could follow them, and perhaps there would be a battle on the sea.

A hundred Pisangs, in perhaps ten boats, would be a formidable fleet to attack or resist.

Mr. Mole emerged from his place of concealment and looking around him saw nobody.

"Oh, Jack! good Jack! don't leave me," he exclaimed. "I'm taken very bad all at once; don't leave me Jack."

There was no answer.

"Harkaway, my dear boy, this is wrong," he continued. "I am one of you. I have joined you, and yet you desert me. Why, where the deuce have you gone? Have you found a hole as well as I?"

He ran to the edge of the cliff, and looking down, saw them already in the boat.

Harvey was in the middle setting the sail; Monday stood at the bow with a paddle in his hand; and Jack manfully grasped the tiller.

"Whoa!" cried Mr. Mole. "I say, hold hard. I'm coming. Whoa, there! whoa!"

In his hurry to get down the cliff, he missed his footing after he had gone a few yards.

This caused him to roll down very gracefully until he reached the bottom.

He was bruised and breathless.

Picking himself up with a naughty exclamation, he ran to the boat, and stepping into the water, crawled on board and lay down exhausted at Jack's feet.

"Away we go. Bravo! Mole, you've done it. Off we are, Dick," cried Jack, in a loud voice.

"Right," replied Harvey, allowing the little sail to belly to the breeze.

"We've got the start of the wretches. Hurrah! Steady, Dick, steady," added Jack, as the heavy-laden craft heeled over a little.

"Steady she is," answered Harvey, slackening the sail.

"She'll weather it, sir. Bravo!" continued Jack.

"We've got our ballast on board," remarked Harvey, pointing to Mr. Mole.

The late senior master heard the observation.

"Ballast, Harvey, is not a fitting noun substantive to apply to me," he said.

"Got your wind again sir, have you?"

"I thank heaven for all its mercys, and that is one of them."

"You came down that hill with a fine run. It was a proper come down, sir," Harvey said with a laugh.

"You may jeer, my young friend, but should the savages overtake you, I trust that my influence with them may be sufficient to save your lives. Ballast, indeed! A nice term to apply to one in my position. Ballast! Well, it isn't worth talking about; but I never was called ballast before—no, not even by the Pisangs," said Mr. Mole in high dudgeon.

"I didn't mean any offense, sir."

"When none is meant, none is taken. I accept your apology, Harvey, and will you be good enough to ask your friend Harkaway for some stimulating beverage? I bore myself bravely through the scrimmage, and I have reason to believe that one, at least, of the savages fell before my unerring aim."

"Not now, Mr. Mole," replied Jack, smiling in spite of his preoccupation; "wait a bit, please, till we get clear of the reef."

"As you please, Harkaway. Can I make myself of any further use?" said Mr. Mole, with a sign of resignation.

"Lie still where you are, that's all you can do."

"I should like Mr. Crawcour and all our friends, if any of us reach England again, to know that I bore myself bravely, and did not shrink in the hour of danger."

"I'll see to that, sir. It shall be put down in my diary."

"With that promise I am content. Call upon me, Harkaway, when peril is pressing; Mole will be to the fore."

"Right you are, sir. Steady, Monday; mind the reef!" replied Jack.

The boat was laden nearly to the water's edge.

She was now nearing the passage in the reef through which Monday intended to conduct her.

He lifted his paddle first one side, then the other, as he wanted Jack to steer.

It was evident that he had been in a boat before, and knew well how to handle one.

In five minutes she would be floating fairly on the open sea.

"I wonder," said Harvey, "where the boats of the Pisangs are?"

Scarcely had he spoken when loud cries assailed his ears.

Turning round to look from whence they proceeded he saw a confused mass of men, about three hundred yards from the spot at which they had embarked.

Several boats, which he had not before noticed, were lying on the beach.

"What is it, Dick?" asked Jack, who could not turn his head round.

"Pisangs," answered Harvey, "and a jolly good heap of them, too. They swarm like flies!"

"What are they doing?"

"Getting into their boats. They have unfortunately landed close to the castle, and will be after us in a twinkling."

"Never mind; we shall be through the reef in a brace of shakes, and perhaps they don't know this opening."

"What a pity they don't! they must have come through it."

"Perhaps so," said Jack, thoughtfully; "at any rate, we have one advantage over them. They have no guns, or, at least, if they have stolen ours, they have no powder; so we shall best them that way."

"Keep um boat straight, Mast' Jack," replied Monday.

The opening in the reef was reached.

As it was a very narrow channel and the wind was high, the utmost caution was necessary to steer clear.

Monday used his paddle in the water with great dexterity.

The surf ran up in a dangerous manner, but Jack did not allow the boat time to get broadside on, and so she did not ship at sea.

She rode gallantly upon the waves, and showed herself thoroughly seaworthy under good management.

Jack kept her well before the wind as she met the surf with her bows, stemming the tide beautifully.

"Well done, Mast' Jack," cried Monday, "that your sort, all ri' soon."

In the meantime the cries of Pisangs redoubled.

They were rapidly taking to their boats.

The chase threatened to be a hot one.

Hunston's blackened figure was discernible in their midst, and from his frantic motions he appeared to be dreadfully annoyed at the escape of his former friends.

"There's Hunston," said Harvey, "I'd swear to his ugly mug in a thousand."

"If there's any mischief brewing he's sure to be in it," replied Jack.

"Don't he look wild, that's all?" continued Harvey.

"Perhaps he'll be wilder, when he sees us scudding before the wind, and finds that we've slipped our cable just in time to put him in the hole. Steady, Monday, that's it, my man; another moment, and we shall be clear," Jack exclaimed, in his usual tone of command.

They were half through the dangerous passage.

The enemy were in hot pursuit of them, and a short time would decide their fate.

Several boats, manned by the enraged Pisangs, started in pursuit of Jack and his companions.

Their fury knew no bounds when they saw their prey escaping.

The explosion which had killed and disabled several of their number, had first of all put them out of temper.

Loss of the powder they had expected to capture, and without which their guns were of no use, made them worse.

The death of the larger part of the party who had discovered the boat did not tend to increase their good humor.

And the escape from the island of those whom they had regarded as three sure victims, put the finishing touch to their rage.

Hunston and Keyali were in the first two boats that went after the fugitives.

The Tuan Biza and others followed quickly.

Hunston had promised Keyali Jack's head, and as Keyali could not marry until he got a head belonging to somebody, he was very anxious to have it.

He had made sure of catching Jack on the island, and in his danger of being disappointed, he danced about in the boat at the risk of upsetting it.

Hunston had to remonstrate with him and make him sit down.

His loud cries and exclamations were heard by Jack and Harvey, who had learnt a good deal of the native language from Monday.

This was the natural consequence of learning Monday English.

Mr. Mole also understood the language spoken by the Pisangs and the Limbians, owing to his having been a captive among the former.

The same tongue was common to both the tribes.

"I'll have your head!" shouted Jack, in derision, as his boat shot through the narrow opening in the reef.

He had heard Keyali's ravings and meant to chaff him and Hunston.

But he spoke in the native language so that he might be comprehended by both, as Hunston was by this time thoroughly well able to converse in the dialect.

"Take care we don't have yours," replied Hunston, shouting in the same loud tone.

"No fear, old boy," replied Jack.

"I don't know that," replied Hunston.

"Take a fool's advice," continued Jack, "and don't come too near us. We've got guns and you haven't."

"What of that? We've got bows and arrows and spears, and our arrows can fly as straight as your shot."

"Perhaps, but they can't carry as far, and we shan't let you get within shot of us."

Hunston was silent.

He saw the force of the argument.

"Give me his head; you promised me his head, and Tecona, my beloved, will not be my wife till I get a head. I must, I will have his head," Keyali continued to shout.

"Keep that great calf quiet, can't you?" cried Jack.

"He wants his rights," replied Hunston.

"Then he'll have to wait."

Harvey was hard at work setting the sails, and he had surprised Jack by rigging up a flying jib, which gave

them an advantage over their pursuers, who only had a mainsail.

"Bravo, Dick!" exclaimed Jack, as the breeze caught her and she sped onward like a thing of life.

Monday stood at the bows till the boat was clear of the rocks.

Then he sat down and looked contentedly at the pursuers.

"They plenty of them, Mast' Jack," he said, with a long face.

"We shall be a match for them, Monday," replied Jack.

"Hope so, sare; no want lose head. I hear Keyali cry for you. He do same for me once; but I 'scape and you save me. Keyali have mine 'fore yours," said the good-hearted fellow.

"I'll take precious good care he don't have either," returned Jack, dryly. "If he does, I'll forgive him. Which way shall I steer, Monday?"

Monday made a gesture which indicated west by north.

And following the direction of his arm, Jack put the boat about.

"Wire in, Jack, and get your name up. That's your sort," said Harvey.

"You shut up, and mind that flying jib of yours," said Jack, laughing.

"You look fine, standing there and coaching the canoe. Hunston's also standing up, but he isn't a patch upon you," continued Harvey.

"Stow it, Dick," answered Jack. "I don't want any buttering, and it isn't a time for humbug."

In fact it was not a time for chaffing.

But the boys kept their spirits up wonderfully well, and were delighted at getting away from the enemy.

They were showing them what sailors call a "clean pair of heels."

Mr. Mole was with them too.

They had every reason to believe him loyal and true.

If so, he was an addition to their strength.

The boat ran splendidly before the freshening breeze.

The gale had lulled, but began to get up again, though Jack did not anticipate much more of it.

Wind in those latitudes often sinks as rapidly as it rises.

"There will be a fine sunset," remarked Monday.

"So I think," replied Jack, "and worse luck for us."

Everyone looked, as he spoke, at the pursuing boats. It was true that they were distancing them, and that every moment left them farther behind.

But in the event of a sudden calm, they could not strike their sails and use their oars.

Jack had no oars.

He had not thought of being chased on the ocean, and for that reason did not make any.

Harvey attended to the sails with great skill, and obtained praise from Jack, who said:

"Bravo, Dick! A better fellow than you never loosened a topsail."

"We only want a flag to make us perfect," replied Harvey.

"Run up Mr. Mole's tile. It won't look bad, and I see the owner has gone to sleep."

"Right you are," said Harvey.

He took Mr. Mole's hat, and, without much exertion, secured it at the head of their small mast.

"We can call it the British standard waving at the topmast, he observed. "But it will show them that we have got Mole on board, and they will know there is one more of us to fight."

"Hurrah for the blue sea!" said Jack, as they shot ahead, and the cries of their enemies grew fainter behind them.

At this exclamation, Mr. Mole was aroused, and looked languidly around him.

"Harvey," he said, "I will thank you for my hat. You imagined me asleep, but I was only revolving mighty ideas in my mind, and I saw you make free with my Panama straw."

Harvey pointed upwards.

"The wind's caught it, sir, and it's stuck up aloft," he replied.

"Now that's a curious thing," remarked Mr. Mole.

"Stop your ship, Harkaway, and get down my hat."

"Strike our flag? Not if I know it. That's the banner of independence, and meant as a defiance to the Pisangs," responded Jack.

"Oh, if it's meant as a defiance to the Pisangs, all right," replied Mr. Mole, wrapping a handkerchief of the bandana species round his head.

"Mast' Jack," said Monday, "give um Monday a drink of rum."

"Certainly," answered Jack, taking out a bottle, and handing it to him. "You've had some hot work, and you deserve it."

The bottle was given to Monday, who took a pull, and seemed much relieved.

Mr. Mole eyed it wistfully, and said in a low voice: "My faithful savage, hand me that bottle. I will replace it in a secure position."

Monday gave it to him, and he pretended to stow it away, but, when no one was looking, he solaced himself with a secret draught, which did not tend to improve his usefulness to the party.

In fact he soon fell into such a deep sleep, that he did not wake, although important events were passing around him.

As Jack had anticipated, the wind fell towards evening.

Their pursuers were out of sight, but they could not be far off.

The boat made slow progress, and such advance as she did make grew less every five minutes.

In the tropics, when the sun sets, it is high time for everyone to hurry home.

There is no fading twilight.

Darkness presses closely on the footsteps of retreating day, and at once it is night.

In addition to the coming darkness, a thick mist began to rise.

This might serve to conceal the runaways from the prying eyes of their pursuers.

In the absence of wind it was necessary to remain quiet till morning.

There was no current that would run the boat back to the rocks.

She might drift a little with the motion of the waves, but that was all.

Furling the sails, a watch was set.

Harvey and Monday lay down in the bottom of the boat and sought that sleep of which they were in need.

Jack sat on one of the thwarts and kept his ears open, for his eyes were not of much use in the thick mist and darkness.

Hours passed and nothing was heard but the rolling of the waves.

The boat was some miles from the shore, and Jack could not distinguish the breaking of the surf upon the rocks.

A speck of light appeared in the east.

Day was about to break.

Jack, who was nearly worn out, touched Harvey on the shoulder.

The latter sprang up.

"What is it?" he exclaimed; "are the Pisangs upon us?"

"No. I can see no signs of them, but I want to have a pitch, and as I've been on duty for so many hours, I thought you might take a turn."

"Of course," replied Harvey, "why didn't you wake me before?"

"It's time enough. I wonder how long the calm is going to last!" said Jack; "we must look out, for I expect the beggars will be upon us as soon as the mist rises."

He was about to lie down in the boat, when his practiced ears detected the sound of oars in the distance.

"Hark!" he said, "do you hear that, Dick?"

"Oars," replied Harvey; "they are cruising about for us, knowing that we are stuck somewhere in this infernal mist."

"If it's only one boat, I don't mind," Jack continued, "or we might tackle two, but if the whole fleet are together it's a case of Jack's up the orchard with us."

"I should think they have been separated in the night, and that the one we hear is a solitary vessel, which will be as much astonished at seeing us as we are at meeting her," observed Harvey.

"I'd give something if the wind would blow, if it was only a capful, it would show what's behind, and we'd soon let them know what stuff our craft is made of."

The sound of the oars, which fell into, and were recovered regularly from the water, grew more distinct.

"Stand close, but don't fire till I give the order," exclaimed Jack.

Harvey nodded, and his companion woke Monday, and Mr. Mole, whispering to them not to speak above their breath, as the enemy were not far off.

Monday grasped his rifle tighter, and looked to his pistols. Mr. Mole handled a revolver, which was his only weapon, with a carelessness that suggested danger to those around him, rather than to the enemy.

His contempt for the latter may perhaps be accounted for, from the fact that they were up to this time invisible.

"Don't let a shot be fired till I give the signal," Jack again said. "Let them run alongside of us nearly, so that we can make sure of our men."

"Four of us," remarked Monday under his breath, "um Pisang boat generally carry six to row, and one to steer."

"That's seven. It's odds against us, but we have power and shot, and they have none, so that makes us equal."

"Mr. Mole must get um head," said Monday. "and then him marry black princess at Limbi."

"Thank you, my worthy friend," replied Mr. Mole, in a tone of disgust. "I don't care about dusky beauties."

"With us a great chief can have three wife. Mr. Mole great chief. He cut off Pisang head, and then he have three wife," continued Monday with a grin.

"The Lord deliver me from such a fate!" said Mr. Mole, inwardly shuddering at the prospect.

Monday was about to speak again, when Jack said, "Hush!"

The dim outline of the proa hove in sight.

All held their breath, and nerved themselves for the coming encounter.

The battle would be short, sharp, and decisive.

CHAPTER XIV

A FIGHT UNDER THE SEA.

PRESENTLY a shout from the occupants of the boat showed Jack that he was perceived.

It was useless to remain on the defensive any longer.

"Let them have it. Pour in a volley," he exclaimed.

"Aim low, and hurrah for old England!"

There was no white man in the boat, but Jack recognized as the one who was steering Keyali, who had evinced such a longing for a white man's head.

Keyali was evidently in command.

He had no idea that he was so near those of whom he was in pursuit, and would have put back out of harm's way, had it not been too late.

The Pisangs ceased rowing, and seized their spears. With such force had the boat been propelled, that its momentum threatened to carry it alongside of the boys.

As soon as Jack had given the word there was a report of firearms.

At the same moment, the wind began to lift, the fog a faint breeze was springing up. Four of the Pisang fell under the well directed shots.

The remaining three sprang from their boat into Jack's and a hand-to-hand fight ensued.

Keyali, with an eye like a hawk, singled out Jack, whom he caught round the neck and waist, with such a determined grip that he could not use his fire-arms.

Harvey was wounded in the thigh by a spear, and lay at the bottom of the boat helpless.

Monday tackled one Pisang, and Mr. Mole, in self-defense grappled with another.

Jack and Keyali rocked to and fro in deadly embrace. Suddenly they lost their balance, and fell into the sea.

Down, down, they sank, as if they were so much lead.

Jack feared they would both be drowned, and it was impossible to live long under water.

Mr. Mole saw them disappear and was so alarmed that he forgot to go on fighting, and the Pisang with whom he had been battling was about to stab him with a murderous-looking knife, when Harvey crawled up.

He seized the savage's leg and made his teeth meet in the flesh.

This caused him such pain, that he dropped his knife, and fell on his knees, howling loudly.

Mr. Mole had begun to say his prayers, thinking it was all over with him.

He regained his courage, however, and fired a pistol close to his ear.

The Pisang fell forward with a groan.

Taking up the knife, Mr. Mole prodded him with it in various parts of the body.

"That will do, sir. He's dead as mutton," said Harvey.

"I like to make sure," replied Mr. Mole, inflicting more savage thrusts with the knife.

At the same time, Monday settled accounts with his antagonist; and, cutting off his head, held up the bleeding trophy in triumph.

"You all right, Mist' Mole? You nuch hurt, Mast' Harvey?" exclaimed Monday, adding with a look of bewilderment, "Oh, de debbel! Where Mast' Jack? Him gone!"

"Gone!" said Harvey. "Isn't Harkaway here?"

"I saw him fall overboard not long ago," replied Mr. Mole, "locked in the arms of one Keyali, whom I know to be a very truculent ruffian."

Monday and Harvey looked blankly at one another.

In the meantime, Jack had continued to descend into the bosom of the deep.

He managed to keep his senses about him.

Keyali would not let go, but suddenly Jack felt one arm relax which allowed him to make use of his right hand.

He remembered that he had a sheath knife in his belt.

If he could draw this he might deal his adversary a blow which would save his life.

Apparently the same idea occurred to Keyali, for he began to feel for his knife.

Luckily for Jack it had fallen out in the struggle, being only slenderly secured with a string round his waist.

It did not take more than a second to assure Keyali of this fact.

He now struggled to regain his hold of Jack, and endeavored to move one hand to his throat, so as to strangle him.

Being the stronger of the two, the Pisang might have succeeded in this effort, had he not given Jack an opportunity when he first loosened his grasp to feel for his knife.

This was a fortunate chance for Harkaway.

Had it not been for this he would probably have soon floated a blackened and swollen corpse, before the eyes of his friends.

As soon as he had drawn the knife, he stabbed Keyali repeatedly about the legs.

The water was soon crimsoned with blood.

Keyali tightened his grip, and Jack, whose strength began to fail him, and whose head grew dizzy with the pressure of the water, made frantic efforts to reach a vital part of the Pisang's body.

This fight under the sea was terrible.

They had been beneath the waves nearly three-quarters of a minute.

Short as the time in reality was, it seemed a lifetime to Jack.

Maddened with pain, Keyali succeeded in grasping his opponent's throat.

The stifling sensation that had attacked Jack increased.

A mist swam before his eyes.

Making one last effort, he plunged his knife up to the hilt in the Pisang's body.

Gradually his hold relaxed.

The arms fell down, and the man was dead.

Raising his feet, Jack struck the lifeless body, sending it down into the sea.

At the same time he began to ascend.

It was time.

A very short period more, and he would have gone to the bottom, locked in that death grip.

Suddenly he appeared above the surface close to the boat.

Monday stretched out his arms, and dragged him on board, breathless, panting and exhausted.

It was some time before he could speak.

When he was able to use his voice, he gave an account of the fight beneath the waves.

"Thank goodness I am none the worse for it," he added. "But I hope never again to have such a tussle. Here, you Kafoozlum—what's your name, Mon-

day—give me some brandy to wash the salt water out of my mouth."

Monday did as he was requested, and Jack began to revive sensibly.

"I need not ask how you got on," he continued, for I see you have disposed of your enemies. Are you hurt, Dick?"

Harvey was tying a bandage round his leg, and he replied:

"I've got an ugly thrust in the leg from a spear, but it's not much."

"Throw the carrion overboard," Jack said, pointing to the two dead Pisangs.

Monday proceeded to do so.

"I think you will all bear witness to my bravery," observed Mr. Mole. "I dispatched that wretched creature whom Monday is about to consign to the deep. I, Isaac Mole, dispatched him with my own hand."

"If I hadn't bit him in the leg with my teeth," said Harvey, "you would have gone to the mole country, sir."

"No jokes, Harvey; you may have distracted the poor fellow's attention, but I had him well in hand throughout, and was never for one moment afraid of him. Harkaway, pass the bottle in a friendly spirit, and let us drink to our noble selves."

Jack granted his request, and Mr. Mole took a deep draught.

"Drink deep, the poet says," remarked Mr. Mole. "And truly he was right, for this spirit comforteth the inner man and keepeth out the rawness of the fog, which I perceive is disappearing."

In fact, as he spoke, the sail which had been lying idly by the mast began to flap to and fro.

"Hurrah," cried Jack, "the wind is coming."

"I'm sorry I can't lend a hand," said Harvey.

"You be still," replied Jack, who put some boating jackets under Harvey to make his position more comfortable.

"You want to rest as much as I, for you were on the watch all night."

"Never mind me. I can't sleep when there is anything to do, but I make up for it afterwards. If the wind lasts, and Monday is right in his steering, we shall make Limbi in four or five hours."

Jack set the sails, and the little craft, as the wind caught her, ran before it in splendid style.

The sails bellied to the breeze, and Monday took the helm.

"Harkaway," said Mr. Mole, "take the rest, of which you stand so much in need, and leave the management of the boat to this trusty savage and myself."

"Very well," said Jack, who thought he might safely do so, as there was nothing of consequence to attend to.

Accordingly he threw himself down, wet as he was, knowing that the hot sun would dry him, and fell fast asleep.

Mr. Mole applied his lips frequently to the bottle, much to Monday's delight.

"Mist' Mole got um best friend," he observed, as Mole hugged the bottle tightly.

"If that observation is intended to this case bottle," replied Mr. Mole, "all I can say is that you are a very rude and impertinent negro."

"No offense, sare; beg um pardon," said Monday. "Me 'fraid of you, sare; you fight so well."

This compliment mollified the object of it.

"You are right," he said; "by my bravery I have saved you all from a dreadful fate. I hewed mine adversary in pieces; but you must not repeat your remarks. In this climate the European requires stimulants to protect himself from the trying effects of the weather. What I take is taken with reluctance, and strictly as medicine."

"Monday not mind a drop of same sort of medsun."

"Not a drop. It is not good for you who are young and strong, and accustomed to the climate."

"Very well, Mist' Mole know best. Monday get him three wife."

"If you suggest such a thing," cried Mr. Mole, in a rage, "I'll—I'll wring your neck like—like a sparrow's."

"No wring um poor Monday neck. Monday do what him like in Limbi. His name Matabella, and his father, Lanindyer. Great chief. King of island. All obey Monday. If Monday say Mole great chief, him cut off all Pisang's heads, the women all love him and he be 'bliged to have one, two, three wife."

"Is your father really the Tuan Biza of Limbi?" asked Mr. Mole.

Monday nodded his head vehemently.

"It's quite right," exclaimed Harvey, who could not sleep through pain, and had been an amused listener to this conversation.

"Is he not joking? I have found him of a facetious tendency."

"No. Monday's a howling swell in his own diggings, ain't you, Mon?" said Harvey.

"Matabella, him show Mist' Mole," answered the black, drawing himself up proudly as he stood in the stern, rudder-lines in hand.

"Take the bottle and help yourself, my young and intelligent friend," exclaimed Mr. Mole.

Monday did so with a grin.

"I hope nothing I have said has given you offense," continued Mr. Mole; "I had no idea you were a prince in your own country. But for heaven's sake, say no more about the wives."

The conversation dropped, and the boat went on her course, the wind continuing to rise, as if impatient at having been still during the night.

No more boats belonging to the Pisang fleet were visible.

The sun rose high in the heavens, and the heavily-laden craft which carried the boys and their fortunes slowly ploughed her way along the deep.

Harvey and Mr. Mole covered themselves with a tarpaulin and sought forgetfulness in slumber.

Monday was alone in command of the boat.

He could not steer and see to the sails as well, and when the force of the wind increased, and the sea rose, he thought it advisable to wake Jack.

Nearly five hours had passed since the dispersion of the Pisangs.

Jack had had time to recruit his wasted energies.

The boat made one or two dangerous lurches over, and Monday was afraid she might capsize. Jack started up with alacrity.

"What is it?" he asked.

Monday explained to him, and pointing to a dark ridge visible on the verge of the horizon, added:

"That Limbi."

"Oh, is that Limbi?" asked Jack. "You know your way about in these waters. How shall we land?"

"No land in the surf—not in this boat," answered Monday. "They send out boat when see us, and then we land in our fashion."

"Very well. I leave it all to you," replied Jack, well pleased at the prospect of reaching their journey's end without further danger.

The land was not more than five or six miles distant.

Their voyage would soon be over.

CHAPTER XV.

RECEPTION AT LIMBI.

The first sight of Limbi was not a reassuring one.

A straight open beach descended abruptly beneath the sea, so that the high swell never once broke before finding itself suddenly stopped in its rapid course.

The water rose up in one huge wall that rolled forward and fell on the steep shore with a roar like thunder.

Every few moments the water would rebound from the sand until it rose twice and a half as high as the natives standing near it, for several of the islanders had collected at the novel sight of a vessel standing in for their shore.

"My dear Harkaway," said Mr. Mole, who was roused from his sleep by the breaking of the surf, "you surely do not intend to run the risk of landing on such a coast?"

"Monday says he will make it all right," replied Jack.

"We near 'nuff now," exclaimed Monday; "please take in sail, Mast' Jack."

Jack did so, and the boat ceased her onward career, merely drifting a little with the tide.

Monday put his hands to his mouth, and gave utterance to a peculiarly shrill and piercing cry, which he repeated three times.

"That to let them know me come, sare," he observed.

The noise awoke Harvey, who, looking round him in astonishment, said:

"What's that beastly row?"

"It's only Monday," answered Jack.

"I thought it was um Pisangs, as he calls them. I never heard such a din in my life. It was like a baked 'tater boy on a cold night in winter, singing out, 'all 'ot, all 'ot!'"

"That our war cry," explained Monday; "all my people know my voice; they say that Matabella, and my father come out to me in a proa and take us all on shore."

"Your father. Is he on the beach?"

"Yes. Monday see him. Look, look; he telling them it me, and they shake head. Now he order boat, because they all think me dead—killed, eat up by Pisang. See! father, how um run Mast' Jack; how um skip, Mast' Harvey, how um talk, sare."

The black grew quite excited at the prospect of meeting with his father.

In fact, Jack saw that the few natives whom he had at first distinguished on the beach had grown into a crowd, which numbered upwards of two hundred.

An elderly man moved in their midst; and to him they paid the strictest attention, as if he were entitled to command.

His manner was that of a prince, and it was clear that Monday's peculiar cry had produced a singular effect upon the inhabitants of the island.

For a few minutes it was not evident what the Limbians were about.

They ran to and fro carrying pieces of wood, and all seemed confusion.

"What are the beggars trying to do?" asked Harvey.

"Blest if I know," replied Jack. "They are like bees in a hive, when they're going to swarm."

The natives did not keep them long in suspense.

They soon made a rude skid or wide ladder with large poles on the sides and small green ones with the bark torn off for the rounds.

This was laid down on the beach while the wave was forming, and a heavy boat, with a sort of awning in the middle to keep off the spray, was pushed on to it as the wave broke and a broad sheet of surge partially buoyed her up.

As this wave receded, she was successfully launched.

The boat, guided by native hands, reached Jack's boat, and an affectionate greeting passed between Monday and his friends.

His father, the Tuan Biza of Limbi, was a man of commanding stature, but his self-possession was great.

He had given up his son as lost.

When a prisoner falls into the hands of the enemies, he rarely, if ever, escapes.

To see Matabella again, was to Lanindyer a resurrection of his son.

Monday threw himself on his neck and kissed him affectionately, but the old man displayed no emotion. It was evident, though, that he was affected, for tears trembled in his eyes.

When Monday recovered himself, he pointed to Jack, Harvey and Mr. Mole, and told them in the native language who they were and what they had done for him.

In teaching Monday English, Jack and Harvey had, of necessity, learnt his language.

So that the conversation between father and son was intelligible to them.

Mr. Mole also knew the native dialect, which was common to all the tribes about these islands, for he had picked it up during his captivity.

Turning to Jack, the aged chief said:

"Saviour of my child, you are welcome to Limbi, and you shall live like a prince among our people."

"Thank you," replied Jack. "It is my pride to be the friend of so great a chief as Lanindyer who is alike renowned in war and peace."

The Tuan Biza now set his men to work and all the stores were moved out of Jack's boat into the proa, and in the latter they all embarked, leaving their own crafts to ride at anchor in charge of a native.

Harvey was lifted carefully from one boat to the other, being unable to walk, as his wound was painful in the extreme, and his leg much swollen.

When all was ready, they ran into the shore over the heavy rollers.

Other natives appeared on the shore with a huge coil of rattan an inch or more in diameter.

Two or three of them seized an end, ran down and plunged into a huge wave as coolly and unhesitatingly as a diver would leap from the side of a boat into a quiet bay.

The end of the cord was fastened to the front part of the boat.

The other was carried up a long way on the beach, and the natives ranged themselves in two rows, each grasping it with one hand ready to haul in when the signal was given. A number of heavy seas now rolled in and broke, but the natives on board kept the boat from being swept backward or forward.

A smaller swell now came on.

Every native gave a wild yell, and those on shore hauled in with all their might.

Away darted the boat on the crest of a wave with the swiftness of an arrow.

Soon the boat was in the midst of the surf.

The next instant it was on the skid, and away it glided with the speed of a locomotive.

Before Jack could realize the fact, they were high and dry upon the bank before the next wave came in.

In this way was their landing in Limbi effected.

Monday had not exaggerated his influence with the natives of Limbi.

They were about a thousand in number, living in a town called Tompano, which was built on a hill.

This made it healthy, and afforded some security from attack.

Monday's father had ruled over the inhabitants for some years, as his father had done before him.

He was, in fact, descended from a long line of princes.

The people who lived in the neighboring island of Pisang were the hereditary enemies of the Limbians.

War was almost always going on between them, and with varying success.

The town in which the Pisangs lived, was called Palembang.

A few years ago the Limbians had invaded Pisang, and being victorious, burnt Palembang to the ground.

This made the Pisangs very angry and vindictive.

They had vowed vengeance ever since, and threatened an invasion of Limbi.

Jack's supply of powder, shot and guns was exhibited to the Limbians, and their use explained to them.

They hailed Jack and his friends at once as great chiefs.

A house was given them to live in near the king's palace.

They were delighted at the restoration of Matabella, or Monday, who was much beloved.

These simple people, savages though they were in their habits, were not wanting in gratitude.

Jack got all their fighting men together, and instructed them in the use of firearms.

But he was very sparing with the powder and shot, because when the supply was gone he could get no more.

He knew of what advantage it would be to him and his friends in the event of an invasion of Limbi.

That Hunston would carry on the war he did not doubt.

If, indeed, the Pisangs should be afraid to invade Limbi, he determined to land an army on their island.

For some time everything went on quietly.

The Pisangs did not show themselves.

Monday would not leave Jack.

He might have lived in his father's palace, but his attachment to the boys was so great that he lived in their house, and was Jack's body guard.

He never allowed him to stir out unless he accompanied him.

"You save my life, and you teach me do what right," he said. "I spend my life with you. It is your life, and Monday still your servant."

"My friend, you mean, Monday," replied Jack.

"You do as you like with me, Mast' Jack," continued the grateful fellow. "You ask me to die for you, I do it, because I then give back the life you save."

Both Jack and Harvey were much attached to Monday, and liked to have him near them.

Harvey's leg got well in about six weeks, and he could walk again.

They had plenty of servants, and did not allow Mon-

day to do any menial work, though he was always ready to lend a hand when necessary.

As the Pisangs did not show themselves, Jack planned an invasion of their country on a large scale.

A fleet was provided, and the army, which numbered four hundred men, was drilled every day.

The inhabitants of Pisang and Limbi were about in equal number.

Making an allowance for the women and children, the aged and the infirm, they could put four hundred, or a few more, in the field.

CHAPTER XVI.

MONDAY'S NEWS.

THE white men were an object of attraction to the ladies of Limbi.

Every chief was entitled to have three wives.

It was reported that the strangers had killed their enemies, and therefore were by the laws of the land, able to marry.

Jack and Harvey were too young to indulge in any idea of the sort.

If they had not been, they would not have fallen in love with the Limbian women, who were far from being attractive.

Besides which, Jack was in love with Emily, and his principal reason for the Limbians to attack the Pisangs, was to find if she really was on their island; and if so, rescue her.

Jack found his new friends very idle.

They would fight, hunt, and fish, but nothing more.

The women were made to do the principal part of the work on the island.

All were very fond of dancing.

The principal dance was called the minari.

It consisted of men and women arranging themselves in two rows.

They slowly twisted to the right and left, at the same time moving the extended arms and open hands in circles in opposite directions.

The only motions of the naked feet were to change the weight of the body from the heel to the toe, and reverse it.

Monday had two cousins, Alfura and Ambonia.

They expressed a wish to marry the white men, as a mode of showing their gratitude for their having saved Monday's life.

The king summoned a council to discuss the idea.

Monday heard of it.

Alfura and Ambonia were his near relations, and he hastened to tell his masters the news.

Jack and Harvey were together, talking about Emily.

Mr. Mole had gone out for a walk, to think alone about his tea gardens in China.

"Mast' Jack," exclaimed Monday, coming into the house, "what you think?"

"I don't know," replied Jack. "Have the Pisangs come after us?"

"No; not them, but Tuan Biza and all the chiefs meet in council to-day."

"What about?"

"Alfura and Ambonia—you know them. They are my father's brother's daughters."

"That's a roundabout way of describing them; but no matter. Go ahead," remarked Harvey.

"They have said they want to marry a white man, and the chiefs are to decide whether they are or not."

"Scissors!" exclaimed Jack. "Suppose the white man don't see it?"

"Then he must leave the island," replied Monday.

"If one of the Tuan Biza Family want to marry and choose a man, and he not have her, then he go."

"Oh, that's it, is it? I wish I'd got a return ticket," Jack remarked.

"If the chiefs say yes, they send for you, and it is our custom to place sometimes seven, eight, nine women together."

"Yes."

"Then you go and pick out one, two, three if you like, but of course you take those who have asked for you."

"I see; you pick out the ones who have honored you with their preference," replied Jack.

"That's the dodge to spare their blushes, if they have any," observed Harvey.

"Yes," said Monday, quickly. "You not supposed to know they ask for you?"

"But I don't want to marry," exclaimed Jack.

"Nor I," said Harvey.

"You should have kept us out of this, Monday. It's not kind of you," Jack continued.

Monday grinned.

"Why do you stand grinning there like the ugly baboon that you are?" said Jack, in a rage.

"Scuse me, Mast' Jack. I not grin at you," replied Monday.

"Then you are indulging at my expense," said Harvey. "Where's my crutch? I'll lamn into you, Master Monday, if you were twenty king's sons."

"No lamn in, sare," Monday cried in alarm. "You say you too young to marry. You wait a year and let Mr. Mole marry Alfura and Ambonia; that my idea—that why I grin, sare."

Jack smiled, and Harvey put down the crutch with which he had walked while his leg was bad.

"That's a rattling good idea, too," said Jack. "It will be a rare spree to see Mole with—how many did you say, Monday?"

"Two at first."

"Oh, yes, two to start with, Alfura and Ambonia. Two beauties they are, too—aren't they, Dick?"

"Stunners," replied Harvey. "Alfura's nose is like a squashed pumpkin, and her ears stick out like a cow's, while her mouth would enable her to eat mince pies whole."

"And Ambonia's fat and pudgy, with a temper like a

hyena. I saw her chive a cove down the street the other day and wallop him awfully," said Jack.

"What for?"

"Because he bagged something out of her father's garden. She did give it him and no mistake."

"Monday's a genius," said Harvey.

"If they send for me to the council," continued Jack, "I shall treat them to a little ventriloquism, and say that the great spirit does not wish us to marry for a year, as we are too young."

"And that Mole is to have Alfura and Ambonia, or be cast adrift in a boat without oars, sails, rudder or grub," put in Harvey.

"Exactly."

"That's the ticket," Harvey went on. "You'll fog them beautifully with your ventriloquism."

"Monday," exclaimed Jack.

"Yes, Mast' Jack," replied the black, with his usual respectful manner.

"Don't you let on to anyone about my gift."

"About you talkee in the air?"

"That's it."

"Monday never say nothing."

"Then you say something. 'Never say nothing' isn't grammar, Monday. You ought to go to Craw-cour's, if ever you reach England with us," observed Harvey.

Monday shook his head.

This speech was beyond him.

But he protested that he never mentioned anything that the boys told him to keep secret.

He had heard Jack ventriloquize once or twice, and the mystery had been explained to him.

Jack and Harvey felt perfectly happy when they saw a way out of the new difficulty which now presented itself.

It was nothing unusual in the archipelago for girls of thirteen to marry boys of sixteen.

The natives arrive at maturity so much earlier in warm climates than we do in our colder latitudes.

To plead that they were too young would have been a poor excuse.

"Mole shall be the victim," said Jack.

"How many wives shall he have?" asked Harvey.

"Monday says he can't have more than three by the law of the land. I'd give him a dozen if I could work it."

"Let him have Alfura and Ambonia to commence with. Mole hates women, I think. He was never very civil to them, and if he doesn't care about marrying English beauties, he'll faint at the idea of having two full-blown niggers," observed Harvey.

"As brave a fo'castle man as ever broke biscuit would steer clear of them."

"And naturally a loblolly-boy like Mole will fight shy."

"He's in a narrow channel and he'd better take soundings," said Jack; "for, if I'm not much mistaken, here's a messenger coming up the street to tell me to come to the council."

"That's right, sare," replied Monday. "Him de message, sure enuff."

"Then it's all 'u-p' with Mole; for, to get myself out, I must get him into the mess."

It was as Monday had predicted.

Alfura and Ambonia, ladies of high rank, had, in accordance with the custom of the country, expressed themselves willing to bestow their hands and hearts upon the adventurous stranger.

This proposal, owing to their high position, had to be considered by the chiefs in council.

They had come to the determination that the ladies' wish should be granted.

In the event of non-compliance with the desires of the fair ones, expulsion from the island would be the result.

The council consisted of twenty-five members, who sat on mats in a sort of barn.

Room was made for Jack.

The Tuan Biza himself informed Jack that he might have his choice of his relatives, or take them both for his wives if he liked.

Jack coughed, and replied that he was indeed a fortunate man to be so highly honored.

He shouldn't mind one of the ladies.

With one, however, he would be content, and his friend Harvey might have the other.

A murmur of applause arose.

Then, Jack, throwing his voice into the center of the apartment, near the ceiling, changed the tone, which became serious, if not awful.

"Forbear," he said, "I, the spirit of the white men, speak."

A general consternation seized the chiefs in council.

They look at one another horror-stricken, for, as we have said, they were all superstitious, and believed in witchcraft.

"Jack and Harvey are your guests," he continued. "They are about to lead you against your enemies, the Pisangs, over whom you shall be victorious."

"Their customs are not your customs, and they must not marry until one year has passed, for they are too young to have wives."

A murmur of approbation, mingled with astonishment, ran through the council.

"But," continued Jack, "I, the spirit of the white men, do not wish the ladies Alfura and Ambonia to remain single."

"Who, then, O spirit!" asked the king, "is worthy to have their matchless charms?"

"Who but the Tuan Biza of the white man—who but the great chief Mole, who has qualified himself for marriage by cutting off a head?"

"Good, good," broke from the assembly. "The spirit of the white man speaks the words of wisdom. It is very good."

"Let Tuan Biza Mole be united to both ladies at once," Jack went on.

"It shall be done, O spirit!" said the council, as with one voice, and bowing their heads.

Jack pretended to be disappointed at this interruption, and said that he had taken a fancy to Alfura.

"We have other beauties," replied the king, "and you shall marry when the year has run, O friend of my soul!"

"I was afraid the spirit would interfere," continued Jack.

"Does he often do so?"

"Always, when we do anything against the laws of our priests."

"And is it unlawful to marry before a certain age?" asked the king.

"Of course it is; that's at the bottom of the mischief," answered Jack.

"Rest easy, O son of my adoption!" replied the king. "You shall do no wrong through us."

"Rising, the chief said a few words to his friends, and they dispatched a messenger to fetch Mr. Mole."

"Shall I go, O Tuan Biza, and acquaint my countryman with his good fortune?" asked Jack.

The proposal was accepted, and Jack went in search of Mole.

He left the chiefs in council, holding Jack in higher veneration than ever.

They had not the slightest idea that they had been imposed upon.

To their simple minds the great spirit of the whites had spoken.

His dictates must be obeyed.

Though Jack and Harvey were for a time lost as husbands to their princesses, they had Mole to fall back upon.

For him there was no escape.

Little did he suspect what news was in store for him as he wended his way back to Tompano.

CHAPTER XVII.

MR. MOLE'S DESPAIR.

WHEN Jack returned to Harvey, who was waiting for him with impatience, he began to laugh heartily.

"I've done it, Dick," he said, when his merriment was over. "We're under the protection of the spirit. Has Mole turned up?"

"Not yet. It's feeding-time, though, and Mole is generally pretty punctual at knife-and-fork-time. How did you do it?"

"I told the council that you and I were highly honored, and would marry the ladies. There was applause at this. Then I changed my voice, and you should have seen the beggars stare."

"Of course the spirit forbade the banns, and suggested Mole as the bridegroom. Which is he to have?"

"Both of them."

"Both?" repeated Harvey. "My eye, Jack! It will give him fits. He's always going on about women, and saying he shall die as he lived—a bachelor."

"Will he? We shall see him with a couple of young papooses on his knee. I wonder what color they will be."

"Chocolate and cream—half-and-half."

"Piebald, perhaps. What a lark!" said Jack.

"It's all a spree," remarked Harvey.

At this juncture Mr. Mole entered, looking hot and tired.

He had been botanizing, and carried in his hand some rare specimens of the flora of the island.

"Something more for my collection," he remarked. "I shall have quite a cabinet of curiosities soon."

"I think you will, sir," replied Jack.

"What do you mean? Your observations have a doubtful tendency in them sometimes, Harkaway."

"No doubt about the last start, sir."

"What on earth are you talking about?"

"The council is waiting for you," replied Jack, "and you are destined to a high honor."

"Ah! I suppose they want to make me prime minister or chancellor of the exchequer; very good! I will give these savages a constitution, and bring in an education-bill. We must have a school here."

"It isn't that, sir, though that may come afterwards."

"What is it then?"

"You're to be married, sir."

Mr. Mole gave a high bounce.

Harvey sang:

For I'm mar-ry-ed to a mer-may-ed
At the bottom of the deep, blue sea."

"You are joking, Harkaway. Do not indulge in merriment at my expense. Explain this to me. No foolishness!" exclaimed Mr. Mole.

"It's quite true, sir. Two ladies have chosen you, and by the law of the land, you must marry them, or—"

"Or what?"

"Leave the island in an empty boat—no provisions, no oars, no anything."

"Why, that is certain death!" replied Mole, with a groan, adding:

"Who are the—ahem! the females?"

"Miss Alfura and Ambonia, relatives of the royal family."

"What, those she-dragons? I know them," exclaimed Mr. Mole. "Alfura's forty, if she's a day, and has lost all her front teeth. Ambonia has got the temper of the old gentleman himself, and squints awfully."

"Consider the honor, sir."

"Honor be—but no, I will not give way. I will command myself. I shall proceed to the council-chamber, and remonstrate with those savages."

Jack laughed.

"What is fun to you is death to me, and if I find that you have got this up for me, I'll—I'll—"

Mr. Mole could not find words dreadful enough for what he would do.

"Go on, sir," said Jack. "Who's afraid?"

"I didn't mean anything," Mole replied. "Come, Harkaway, stand my friend in this matter, and get me out of the mess."

"Can't be done."

"Why not?"

"If you don't at once marry those ladies you'll be put into the boat."

"I don't know which is the worst prospect," Mr. Mole said. "Confound the natives! Confound everything."

He began to tear his hair, and danced about like a madman.

When he stopped with a handful of hair in each hand, Jack said:

"That's lively, sir. Can't you favor us again?"

"He's as good as a dancing dervish," cried Harvey.

"Jack, dear Jack," said Mr. Mole, you always were my friend, and a generous fellow; tell me your only chaffing."

"I'm not indeed."

"Then I'm a lost man. Two wives! Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord!"

"In a month's time you'll be entitled to take a third."

"A third!" cried the wretched Mole. "Tell me, Harkaway—tell me, if you love me, if there are any lunatic asylums in this beastly country?"

"Not that I know of."

"If not, I shall wander about the island a raving maniac. Oh, Isaac Mole, why were you ever born? Wretched man, what have you done to deserve such a fate?"

Monday, who had been down to the council-room again, now came back.

"The council has broke up," he said. "They all gone to bring Alfura and Ambonia here."

"Here! Are the furies coming here?" asked Mr. Mole.

"They not long first."

"But they can't take me until the ceremony is performed."

"We no ceremony. They say they have you, and the council decide. Then it all over. No ceremony, sare. They come take you home."

"Now? Do you mean this instant?"

"In one, two short minute," replied Monday.

Mr. Mole began to dance again.

"This how it done. Mist Mole," continued Monday.

"They bring p'raps ten women. All stand in a row. You look at them. One by one they come to you and you shake your head at all but Alfura and Ambonia, to whom you kneel. That all the ceremony."

"Never! I'll die first," said Mr. Mole.

"They put you in boat else," said Monday, grinning.

"Dick, give him some whisky," said Jack.

Harvey poured some brandy into half a coconut shell, and Mole quaffed it eagerly.

"You're a gone coon, sir. Better make the best of it," he observed.

Mr. Mole shook his fist in Monday's face, saying:

"You confounded black lump of ugliness, you have done this for me! sBut I'll have your life!"

Harvey forced him into a seat.

"Let me get at him! I'll do him an injury! I'll have his!"

"Life," he was going to say, when Harvey gravely put in "head," which made Jack burst out laughing.

"Harvey," said Mr. Mole, in a faint tone, "you are low and vulgar. You are raised but little above those poor, benighted savages in the social scale."

"I wouldn't bullyrag them if I were you," replied Harvey. "Remember you are going to marry a couple of the poor benighted."

"Come, sir, don't give way. I'm sure Alfura's got beautiful shiny skin," said Jack.

"And Ambonia's hair is curly and oily," exclaimed Harvey.

"Better not say much," remarked Monday. "They beat you sare; they scratch, they kick."

"Well, it's only for life, that's one comfort; and I shan't live long under the infliction," answered Mr. Mole, with a moan.

As he spoke, a loud noise was heard in the street.

The procession was approaching.

First came the band, which consisted of a score of men carrying gongs. The gongs increased regularly in size from one of five or six inches to one of a foot or fifteen inches in diameter.

Each had a round knob or boss in the middle, which was struck with a small stick.

When made to reverberate in this manner, their music was very agreeable.

It resembled closely that made by small bells.

This instrument was called the bonang.

After the bonangs came the chiefs of the town.

Behind these were the nine virgins, Ambonia and Alfura being in the center.

The rear was brought up by a guard of soldiers, and behind these again came the rabble of the town of Tompano, who, like crowds all over the world, had collected to witness what they could of the unusual ceremony.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TAKING HIM HOME.

WHEN Harvey heard the bonangs, he exclaimed:

"Chingarings and chopsticks! hongs and gongs! That's your sort! Go it, ye cripples! Have some more whisky, sir?"

Mr. Mole began to recover his composure a little.

"I think I will even follow your advice," he answered, "if only to nerve myself for the dreadful ordeal. I want a little something."

"Nothing like a drop of whisky for a nerver," replied Jack.

"That's right, Mist Mole. Show um pluck, sir," chimed in Monday.

"Very well, my black friend," replied Mr. Mole. "I owe you one—yes, sir, I owe you one—and we'll square accounts some day."

"Keep up your pecker. Let them see what stuff you're made of. Don't funk, sir."

"I hope an Englishman never shows the white feather. Harkaway. Nor will I. No, not even under the most trying circumstances."

"Good again," cried Harvey, who was in an ecstasy of delight at the anticipated fun.

"I will bear myself bravely, like one advancing to the sacrifice I have before my eyes the gladiators of ancient Rome."

"Who were they, sir?"

"Have you so soon forgotten the lessons of your early youth, Harkaway? I cry shame upon you."

"Set of coves who fought in the arena," observed Harvey.

"You are right," continued Mr. Mole. "But I object to the word 'coves.' However, let it pass. They had their *Ave 'Caesar,'* or 'Hail Caesar!' and they added '*Morituri te salutamus,'* which, being translated, means 'Being about to die, we salute you. My fate is worse than death, but I will be brave.'"

"I have remarked, sir," said Harvey, "that these Limbi ladies have a peculiar scent or odor of their own."

"Smell—odor. Don't be delicate, Harvey. Call it a smell, which is highly suggestive to polecats."

"All right, sir, anything to please you."

"However disagreeable it may be to native noses, my English nasal organ revolts at it. They are rank, Harvey, very rank; and all the perfumes in Rimmel's shop would not convince me to the contrary."

"You'd like it, sir, when you're used to it," exclaimed Jack.

Mr. Mole darted a ferocious look at him.

The noise of the bonangs increased, and the hoarse shouts of the multitude grew nearer.

Again the wretched man applied himself to the whisky bottle.

"Go it, sir; nip away," exclaimed Harvey, singing:

Whisky killed my poor dad;
Whisky drove my mother mad.
Whisky, whisky,
Whisky for my Johnny!"

Fortified with a sort of Dutch courage, Mr. Mole awaited the coming of the procession with the resignation of a lamb going to slaughter.

"How do you find yourself now, sir?" asked Jack.

"Agenized, my young friend."

"Pity the sorrows of poor old Mole," said Harvey.

Mr. Mole was about to reply when the band halted outside, and ceasing playing, allowed the members of the deputation to enter.

First came the chiefs of the council-chamber, and those were closely followed by the nine virgins.

The soldiers kept guard at the door.

Ranging themselves in a row, the young ladies cast down their eyes and prepared themselves for the ceremony.

The king, addressing Monday, exclaimed:

"Matabella, does the Tuan Biza of the white men know what is required of him by our customs?"

"He does, O king, live for ever," answered Monday.

"Is he aware of the high honor the alliance will confer upon him?"

"He is; and feels deeply gratified, O king, may thy victories increase," replied Monday.

"Let the rites commence."

"At once, O king. May you always be victorious in war," said Monday.

He then filled a calabash with whisky, of which spirit the Limbians had learnt to be very fond, and handed it round to the company.

All partook of it but the women.

"Now, then, sir," said Jack to Mr. Mole, "go in and win. All eyes are upon you."

"Faint heart never won fair lady," exclaimed Harvey. "Keep up the honor of old England."

The nine virgins stood apart, and Mr. Mole staggered rather than walked towards them.

Deep groans broke from him.

The perspiration stood in beads upon his forehead.

At a signal from Monday, the band again struck up a quick, jig-like sort of tune.

The nine virgins looked up.

First one left the rank, and walking past Mr. Mole, he shook his head at her, and she took up a position at the other end of the row.

The second did the same with a like result.

The third was Alfura.

As soon as Mr. Mole saw Alfura, he sank gracefully on one knee before her.

This was the signal of acceptance.

She took a place on his left side.

A loud shout of applause from the assembled spectators rent the air, which was taken up by the mob outside.

Number four now passed Mr. Mole, and was rejected.

The fifth shared a similar fate.

So did six, seven, and eight.

Ambonia was the ninth and before her Mr. Mole bowed as before.

Again the shouts arose as she placed herself on his right side.

Each wife seized an arm, and held him in a tight grip, as if afraid that he was going to run away from them.

The calabash was refilled, and the health of the bridegroom drunk heartily.

"Long live the Tuan Biza of the whites!" ex-

claimed the king, "and may his children people the land."

The chiefs now filed out of the room, and the seven virgins, surrounding Mr. Mole and his wives, followed them.

He was dragged from the apartment, and the procession, led by the band, proceeded down the principal street of Tompano, at the end of which was the house of Alfura and Ambonia.

Mole cast an appealing glance at Jack, who was looking out of a window.

"Never say die, sir," cried Jack.

"They'll comb your hair for you, sir," exclaimed Harvey.

A curse, not loud but deep burst from the unhappy man, who was soon lost to sight by a bend in the street. The ceremony was over.

Mr. Mole was a married man, very much married indeed, and his wives were taking him home to the nuptial board.

It was not until two days had passed that the boys beheld their old friend and instructor.

On the morning of the third day, Mr. Mole paid them a visit.

He looked wistfully around him as he entered, and seemed afraid of being followed.

"Hallo, sir!" exclaimed Jack. "How goes it with you?"

"Badly, my dear boy, very badly," replied Mr. Mole. "How's that? We call you the Great Pasha, the Grand Turk."

"Brigham Young is nearer the mark," said Harvey. "Mole's a Mormonite."

"Bring 'em young, you should say," returned Mr. Mole. "Tempers grow with age, and Ambonia's a perfect fiend. It's too late in life now to correct either of them."

"What's happened, sir? We thought you'd have looked us up before now."

"So I should have done, but I've been locked in, bolted in, barred, and had the liberty of the subject painfully infringed."

"Bolted up, eh, sir? That's nothing extraordinary in married life, is it?" replied Jack.

"I don't know. It's all new to me."

"You ought to be an authority in these matters. Perhaps it's a custom of the country."

"When you're in Turkey, you must do as the Turks do," remarked Harvey.

"Oh, the life I've led!" continued Mr. Mole, with a sigh. "Alfura's not so bad, but Ambonia's an incarnate fiend. She has boxed my ears, and has threatened me with a bamboo cane."

"So you have come out on the loose, sir?"

"I escaped through the window, and, thinking you would comfort me with some spirituous liquor, I have sought you."

"It's very wrong to encourage a married man in staying away from his home; but for the sake of old times, you shall have what you like," said Jack, gravely.

"Spoken like yourself, Harkaway. Whisk, if you please, and plenty of it."

Monday supplied his wants, coming in as Harvey slapped his hands, as a signal for him to appear.

He could not help laughing at Mr. Mole, but a sign from Jack caused him to withdraw.

"It's very hard to be jeered and glibed at by a miserable savage like that," observed Mole, "and I think you ought not to encourage him, Harkaway."

"What did he do, sir?" asked Jack.

"Never mind, he is gone; and the memory of his offenses shall go with him."

"Have you put your marriage in the paper, sir?" asked Harvey, innocently.

"How could I do so when there are no journals in the island, and the natives are unable to read?"

"Oh, I forgot that."

"I think, sir," Jack remarked, "you might have been content with one wife at a time. It is a bad form to have two."

"You know as well as I, Harkaway, that I had no voice in the matter."

"You must have liked the girls in your heart, sir."

"Harkaway," said Mr. Mole, very gravely, "did you ever see a snake?"

"I'm sorry to say I have seen a good many since I have been in this part of the world," replied Jack.

"Did you ever take a fancy to one?"

"I've admired them at a distance, but I can't say I ever thought of cuddling one up in my arms."

"Then don't ask me if I like the Limbi women. Let us talk of something else. I am degraded in my own eyes. Harvey, you keep that bottle too much on your own side. I am afraid you have taken to drinking lately."

"I, sir!" cried Harvey. "No, sir. A sailor always likes his allowance. I don't go beyond it."

Mr. Mole helped himself, and his temper improved.

CHAPTER XIX.

STARTLING NEWS.

"HAVE you heard the news, sir?" asked Jack, after a pause.

"News," repeated Mr. Mole. "I was not aware that in this wretched country they had anything of the sort."

"You ought to take an interest in anything that is moving, because you have a stake in the country."

"If it would gratify you, Harkaway, I will say that I have a feeling of intense interest in anything that may befall this unhappy land," continued Mr. Mole, adding, "Harvey, oblige me by letting the bottle alone. I am quite capable of taking care of it."

"Right, sir," replied Harvey.

"There's going to be a war," continued Jack.

"Going to be. There always is a war, isn't there? The beasts are always fighting."

"He's thinking of his wives," said Harvey.

"Harvey," exclaimed Mr. Mole, in a tone of rebuke, "it is unkind of you to remind me of my misery—let the bottle alone, if you please."

Repeated application to the bottle of whisky made Mr. Mole's eyes swim in his head.

"A war," he said to himself. "What do I care for a dozen wars?"

"We are to start to invade Pisang this day week, sir, and you shall have an independent command," said Jack.

"An independent humbug," answered Mr. Mole.

"What, sir?"

"Humbug, I said," repeated Mr. Mole, who, in spite of his growing inebriety, grew alarmed at the prospect of war. "I said humbug, and I'll stick to it. What have I got to do with war?"

"We are going to fight Hunston."

"Fight him and welcome. Kill him if you like. It's proper for you to do so. You and Harvey are young. I am—ahem!—I am a married man, settled down, you know, Harkaway, and it would not be right to take me from my wife."

"Wives, sir."

"I stand corrected," continued Mr. Mole, with a bland smile. "Go, by all means, Harkaway, and fight those despicable Pisangs. I will stop at home and organize the militia, or whatever the reserved forces may be."

"Won't you come with us?"

"No. My place is here at Tompano. I am a family man, Harkaway. No fighting for me, unless it is for hearth and home; then Isaac Mole will be to the fore, and woe to the foe."

"That's a rhyme, sir. You should wish"—said Harvey.

"I do wish. I wish most devoutly that—that there will be an earthquake which will swallow up Ambonia," replied Mr. Mole.

"Then you don't mind Alfura?"

"She's ugly, but she's not vicious," said Mr. Mole. "I can put up with Alfura; that it to say, for a time."

"Until you can get to your tea-garden in China, sir?" hazarded Jack.

"Precisely, my dear boy."

"You can sing, sir, 'Happy could I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away,'" said Harvey.

"With your usual impulsiveness, you have jumped to a wrong conclusion, Harvey," answered Mr. Mole.

"I could not be happy with either, and my only time of peace is when they are fighting amongst themselves."

"Fighting!"

"Yes, like bull-dogs. When they are not throwing stones and vegetable refuse at me, they are engaged in the mild amusement of tearing each other's cheeks, which is a pleasing pastime for a husband to stand and look on at."

"Sorry for you, sir. Knock 'em down and jump on 'em," said Harvey.

"You are a brute," replied Mr. Mole. "A little while ago you exhorted me to keep up the honor of my country, and behave like an Englishman."

"Dick, shut up," said Jack.

"No," Mr. Mole went on, "I will not reduce myself to the level of a Whitechapel costermonger. I will not even floor them. What though Alfura punches me on the nose, and Ambonia hurls a dead cat in my eye."

"That's nothing, sir," exclaimed Jack.

"Nothing? Isn't it? Did you ever have a dead cat settle on your left eye?" cried Mr. Mole, sharply.

"No, sir, and don't want to. But let me tell you the news. It's rather startling."

"What is it, Harkaway?" said Mr. Mole, handling the bottle with an unsteady hand.

"Excuse me a minute, and then I'll tell you," replied Jack, as Harvey came over and whispered to him.

"Make Mole tight, and carry him home to his wives." Jack nodded, and went on:

"Help yourself, sir. Don't be afraid of it. There's more where that came from."

"I wish you'd come to your news," said Mr. Mole, snappishly.

"We are going to invade Pisang at once. Harvey and I take the lead. Our fleet is ready; our soldiers number four hundred, and it's either to be victory or Westminster Abbey."

"You told me that before, and I persist in my resolve to patrol the town. I will be governor of Tompano," answered Mr. Mole.

"I thought you imagined I was joking, sir, and did not believe what I said," Jack rejoined.

Mr. Mole got up and staggered towards the door.

"Is your floor straight?" he asked.

"Lie down and try, sir."

Mr. Mole sat down with an imbecile chuckle, and said:

"Tell Ambonia I'm very jolly. Say we're jolly good fellows every one. I don't care, Ambonia. I'll let 'bonia know if she giveth me any of her nonshensh."

"Here's your health, sir, and death to Hunston and the Pisangs. You'll drink that toast, won't you?" said Harvey.

He tendered him a glass which Mole tossed off.

It was the finishing stroke, for he rolled backwards, laughing heartily as if it was a good joke.

"He's a settled member," exclaimed Harvey.

"Collar his legs, Dick; I'll take his nut and we'll cart him off home."

"I pity him when Ambonia gets her fingers nicely twisted in his hair," replied Harvey.

They took him up, and were not long in conveying him into the presence of his wives.

The ladies had wondered what had become of their husband, and had been indulging in a little quarrel on their own account.

Various articles of domestic use lay about the room in some confusion.

There were all the signs of a free fight.

When Mr. Mole was deposited on the floor, the wives guessed what had brought him into that state.

Each abused him in the choicest and the most flowery terms which their language allows them to employ.

The boys turned round and went away, leaving them at it, lest they might fall in for their share.

"Ambonia's a caution," said Harvey. "Didn't she slip in a good un?"

Jack made no answer.

"You might have the civility to answer me when I speak to you," continued Harvey.

"Excuse me, Dick. I was thinking of something else. Shall we find the king in, do you think, if we call at the palace?" replied Jack.

"Sure to, I should fancy."

"Step up with me, will you? We must arrange all the details of our invasion, and see how the guns are to be given out."

"Every man in Limbi wants a gun, and two-thirds of them would only shoot their nearest neighbors or pot themselves."

"I think I shall give two guns to every five-and-twenty men, and select the best shots."

Harvey agreed with him, and talking of military matters, they strolled along.

Suddenly an old woman, fantastically dressed, stepped in front of the boys.

"Who is this?" said Jack.

"Hush!" said Harvey. "Don't anger her."

"Why not?"

"It's Nuratella," said Harvey, under his breath.

"Who is she?" returned Jack, as much in the dark as ever.

"Nuratella is a sort of sorceress, witch, prophetess—what you like. All I know is that the people here think a lot of her," replied Harvey.

Nuratella raised her arms, as if commanding silence. She did not understand the English they were speaking, but she saw from their faces that they knew who she was, and that her appearance had produced some impression upon them.

CHAPTER XX.

NURATELLA, THE WITCH.

WE have already hinted that all the inhabitants of the numerous islands in the East Indian Archipelago were strong believers in witchcraft.

Nuratella was regarded as a prophetess of the highest order.

She professed to have power of divining future events, and had been known to still the wind when raging at its highest fury.

Perhaps her knowledge of the weather was superior to that of those around her, and she did not attempt the hazardous task of commanding the storm until she saw some indication of a cessation of the tempest.

At all events she imposed upon the ignorant beings amongst whom her lot was cast.

Her influence over them was remarkable.

Strange, weird, thrilling stories were told about her. It was said that in her youth she had met with, and dared to love, an illustrious chief of the Pisangs.

For this offense she was condemned to death by her own countrymen.

It was treason of the worst sort for a woman of Limbi to look favorably upon a Pisang warrior.

On a man, in fact, whose hands were red with the blood of her kindred.

She was led forth to die.

At the moment when the executioner had uplifted the fatal sword, a volume of light shot out from the sky.

The lightning, for such it was, struck the executioner, and killed him on the spot.

This was considered as an interposition of Providence on her behalf.

She had called down fire from heaven.

The lurid flame was supposed to be of her own conjuring, and she was liberated in all haste.

Ever afterwards she lived a secluded and wild life, but her influence as a witch was established.

All feared her, if none loved her.

It was suspected by some of the shrewdest among the Limbians that she was still in correspondence with the Pisangs.

That she could not forget her early love.

Sometimes the Pisangs obtained information of the movements of the people of Limbi in a mysterious manner.

Nuratella was known to set sail in a frail canoe, and be absent for several days.

Who so likely as she was to visit Pisang, and inform the chiefs there of the plans of the enemies?

She was allowed to attend the councils of her own people, and her advice was much valued.

Yet no one liked to denounce her, nor had they done so, was there any proof of her guilt.

The boys had often heard of her strange and mysterious power.

They did not believe in her magical gifts, but they did not at the same time think it advisable to slight or offend her.

Far better would it have been for Jack if he had never listened to her.

"Well, mother, what do you want?" exclaimed Jack, addressing Nuratella in her own language.

"Follow me, and you shall quickly learn," she replied.

"Shall I come?" asked Harvey.

"Perhaps I had better ask the old girl," said Jack. He put the question to Nuratella.

"No," she answered decisively. "It is you I want. Let your friend return to his home."

"She says no," said Jack, addressing Harvey.

"So I heard. I suppose the old cat means you no harm," replied Harvey. "They don't speak too well of her, though they all funk her."

"She won't hurt me. What does it matter if she is a witch and rides on broomsticks? I don't think she'd find me a light weight if I ride behind."

"All right; you know best. Good-bye, old fellow." Harvey shook his head as if he did not half like his friend to go away with Nuratella.

But Jack was not to be interfered with when he had made up his mind.

There were few things that frightened him, and as he said to himself, he was not going to be afraid of an old woman.

Nuratella led the way into the country, and walked for about a mile, keeping ahead of Jack, to whom she did not address a word.

Occasionally she turned her head to see if he was following her.

The road was simply a rough path, a few large stones having been removed.

The ragged coral rock everywhere projected so completely through the thin soil that it was a wonder to Jack how his conductor could travel barefoot with such apparent ease.

They soon came to a circular hut, enclosed by a low stone wall.

It was the most wretched abode for a human being that could possibly be imagined.

The walls, instead of being made of boards or flattened bamboos, as in the town of Tompano, were composed of small sticks, about three feet high, driven into the ground.

These supported a conical roof, thatched with palm leaves.

An ugly-looking pig, with long bristles on his back, was raking about this detestable novel.

Near the hut was a burial-place.

A low wall enclosed a small angular plot that was filled with earth.

This contained one or more graves, each of which had for its foot and headstones small, square, pyramidal blocks of wood, with the apex fixed in the ground.

A pack of wolf-like dogs saluted Jack with a fierce yelping and barking as he approached the miserable dwelling.

A word from Nuratella calmed them.

Sitting down upon a rude block of stone outside her dwelling, she motioned Jack to stand before her, which he did.

Perhaps if she had been talking to any of her countrymen, she would have had recourse to some mystic rites.

She rightly judged, however, that on one of Jack's education and sense such conduct would not make much impression.

Nevertheless, there was something weird if not awful about the hag.

"They say she was good-looking once," thought Jack; "if so, it must have been a precious long while ago, and no mistake."

"Young man from the great kingdom over the sea, where the lightning owns the power of your wise men, and machines carry you faster than the birds can fly, listen to the words of Nuratella, the sorceress of Limbi," she exclaimed.

The speech showed that she had enjoyed some intercourse with white men, and had gained an insight into their civilization.

But when, where, or how, it was difficult to say.

"At your service, mother," answered Jack. "Ease her! stop her! go ahead!" he added in English, as he was unable to put the latter into what he called "understandable" Limbian.

"You are going to place yourself at the head of my people and invade Pisang," she continued.

"It didn't require a witch to tell me that, when all the island knows it," Jack answered.

"And the Pisangs, too. They are prepared for your coming."

"Are they?" Jack replied. "Have you been kind enough to give them information?"

Nuratella raised her arm threateningly.

"What have I to do with the enemies of my country?" she exclaimed. "To me it is given to pierce the future and to know what has happened in the past, as well as what is taking place in the present."

"Do you mean to sit there calmly, old girl," said Jack, "and tell me that you can prophesy?"

"Put me to the test," she answered. "Ask me anything you like, and as I reply to you, so will I be judged."

Jack thought a moment.

"I'll ask her about Emily," he thought. Nuratella regarded him with her wild-looking eyes, which seemed to possess the fire of insanity, tempered at times by gleams of reason.

"Can you tell me if there is a white captive in Pisang?" he said.

"There are two," she replied.

"Two! Men or women?"

"One a man, the other a fair-haired girl, barely seventeen."

"Perhaps you've been there and seen them," cried Jack, who guessed at once that she referred to Mr. Scratchley and his daughter Emily.

Again Nuratella threatened him with her upraised arm.

"Boy," she said, "to whom do you speak? Many leagues divide Limbi from Pisang."

"But you've got a boat of your own?"

"I tell you that I know them not. The Pisangs and I never meet."

"Well," said Jack, impatiently; "cut along. What have you brought me here for?"

There was a certain bluntness about Jack which would not be checked by any amount of murmuring.

Nuratella had thought to impress, but she found that she had signally failed.

"You love this fair-haired girl," she exclaimed.

"You're not far out there," replied Jack.

"And she loves you."

"That is stale news," replied Jack, imperturbably, "though how you got to know it, it is a puzzler."

"You must meet again. Emily—that is your darling's name—is in peril," continued Nuratella.

"Of what nature?"

"The persecution of a wicked and bad man."

"Hunston."

The name escaped Jack involuntarily.

"That is he," continued Nuratella. "Hunston wishes to make Emily his wife. She, mindful of you, will not consent."

"Of course not."

"But Hunston is the chief adviser of the Pisangs," Nuratella proceeded. "He is their great chief. What he orders, they do."

"I feared this," said Jack, almost tearfully. "I have been wrong to delay so long. We should have attacked the Pisang brutes long ago, but I'll give them a lesson."

His tone was bitter, and his manner almost ferocious.

"Will you not try to save your Emily?" asked the witch, watching his growing anger with a smile.

"What's the use of asking such a stupid question?" he replied, sharply.

"Would you like to see her?"

"When?" he cried.

"At once. This very night. My power will suffice to bring her here."

"Here? On this island?"

"Yes, here; at this very spot. I will ask the spirits with whom I deal to transport her hither."

"Spirits be blown!" Jack said in English. Adding immediately afterwards, "I don't care how you do it, so long as you get Emily."

"It shall be done. I swear it to you. I, Nuratella, say that you shall meet with the flaxen hair here, when the darkness falls upon the earth."

"I will reward you for it," said Jack.

"No reward does Nuratella want. You will lead their victorious army against the Pisangs, and Limbi will enjoy the blessings of peace."

"I'll do my best for it," Jack answered.

"Come hither at sundown, and you shall clasp your Emily in your arms."

"If you can do this, I shall say you are a very clever old woman, and our fortune-tellers are not a patch upon you, but"—

He hesitated.

She interrogated him with her eyes.

"If you trifle with me," he continued, regarding her with a savage look, "I will shoot you with as little compunction as I would knock that bird off his perch."

As he spoke, he took his gun and fired at a bright-plumaged bird in a thicket.

The creature fell dead almost at his feet.

Nuratella saw that she had made an impression upon her listener by the mention of Emily's name.

She followed up her advantage.

"If I, by my arts, contrive that you shall see Emily," she continued, "you must promise me one thing."

"What is it?" asked Jack.

"Do not mention the circumstance to anyone."

"I generally tell my friend Harvey everything," he exclaimed, hesitatingly.

"This time you must not do so."

"I should like him to come with me."

"No, no!" said the witch, imperiously. "You will break the charm if you do not come unattended."

"What's the odds?" Jack replied.

"You must trust me. Are you afraid of a poor old woman?" said Nuratella with a scornful smile.

"I'm afraid of nothing and nobody, if it comes to that. You shall have your way. I'll come alone."

"And you will keep your purpose a secret?"

"I will."

"Can I depend on you?" she asked.

"I am not in the habit of breaking my word," replied Jack. "If I say a thing, I mean it; so good-bye, mother, for the present. I shall be here at dark."

"For your own sake and that of Emily, mind you do not fail," she answered, impressively.

Jack turned on his heel, and walked back to the town of Tompano.

His mind was filled with conflicting emotions.

At one moment he was delighted with the expectation of meeting Emily, whom he had believed to be on one of the islands ever since he read the message from the sea, and the next he feared treachery.

Though what shape this danger would take he could not say.

It was a great fact to have ascertained that Emily had really been wrecked, and that he was near her.

His heart warmed towards the little playfellow of his youth.

With the romantic passion of a young man he loved her dearly.

His blood boiled when he thought she was in the power of Hunston and his associates.

To liberate her he would sacrifice everything.

CHAPTER XXI.

MRS. MOLE NUMBER TWO.

JACK was very thoughtful when he reached his house in Tompano.

His native servant told him that Harvey had gone to Mr. Mole's habitation.

Having nothing better to do, he strolled down in that direction.

When he neared the house, he heard the sound of crockery being smashed.

An earthenware pan flew through the window near his head.

"That's a close shave," he muttered. "I suppose Ambonia's showing her nasty temper."

Harvey met him at the door.

"Look out, Jack," he said; "Mrs. Mole, Number Two, is going it in fine style."

"What's the row?" asked Jack.

"Ambonia slipped into Alfura, who has come to an aunt's somewhere near here, and now Mole's catching it hot."

Jack stepped inside.

Every article of furniture in the room was upset, and Mr. Mole was standing in a corner, in vain striving to stem the storm.

A bucket of water had been thrown over him, which had brought him to his senses, and the effect of the spirit he had drunk was going off.

Ambonia, looking like a fury, held a handful of her husband's hair in her hand, and occasionally amused herself by throwing about in various directions anything she could lay her hands on.

"My dear sir," said Jack, "what is the meaning of this scene? Is Mrs. Mole mad?"

"You may well ask that question, Harkaway," replied Mr. Mole. "I was a little overcome when you brought me home."

Alfura took my part, and she has been obliged to fly the house. Mrs. Mole *secundus*, as we used to say at school, is behaving very strangely, but now there is not much more left to break, she will probably calm down soon."

Ambonia was doing a war dance, and she chattered all the time like a monkey in her native language.

Presently the leg of a chair caught Jack on the side of the head.

"Draw it mild," he observed, rubbing his injured part.

"Don't stand it, Harkaway. Resent it," cried Mr. Mole. "I wouldn't if I were you."

"It's for you, sir," replied Jack, "to keep order in your own household."

"I can't do it. It's beyond me."

"Shall I put her in the water-butt?" asked Jack.

"We haven't got one. That article of civilization is minus in this establishment!"

Mr. Mole would have said more, but a bunch of ripe coconuts hit him on the nose, and he held the injured organ with both hands while he capered about with the pain.

"That's a flop—if you like," said Harvey, grinning.

"Never laugh at a fellow-creature in distress, Harvey," exclaimed Mr. Mole. "I wish you had my nose. Oh! my nose, my poor ill-used nose!"

Ambonia advanced with a long light bamboo, and hit her angry spouse on the head with it.

"One for his nob," remarked Harvey.

Jack advanced, thinking Mr. Mole would be seriously injured, and caught Ambonia in his arms.

He drew her to the window and gave her a kiss.

"Now, my little beauty" said Jack, holding her tightly, "what are you going to do?"

"I shall do nothing. I am calm now," Ambonia replied. "If he would only treat me with kindness, I should not behave like that. He likes Alfura best, and—and—"

"And you're jealous, eh?"

She nodded her head while she lay passively in Jack's arms.

"Will you promise me not to kick up any more row?" asked Jack.

"It's all over now," she sighed.

"Bravo!" cried Harvey. "The way to manage a woman is to be kind to her."

Mr. Mole emerged from his corner.

He looked very grave.

"Harkaway," he exclaimed, "what are you doing with my wife?"

"Doing, sir?"

"Yes; you have her in your arms."

"You may take her, sir. I am not ambitious of the honor," replied Jack.

Mr. Mole ventured to embrace his spouse, but she no sooner felt him touch her than she began to scream and kick.

He laid her down on the floor, and the screaming and kicking continued.

She was in a fit of violent hysterics.

"Oh, Lord! what shall I do?" cried Mr. Mole.

He stood with his hands upraised, the picture of despair.

Ambonia went on with her hysterical symptoms.

"Holler, boys!" said Harvey; "here's another guy!"

"A pair of 'em," remarked Jack, dryly.

"Ambonia's in high strikes," continued Harvey, "and Mr. Mole's"—

"Silence, Harvey," interrupted Mr. Mole. "When you speak of my wife, mention her as Mrs. Mole. To me only is she Ambonia."

"All right, sir. Sit down and take it easy for a spell," replied Harvey. "She'll be a good ten minutes before she come round, and she'll have worn herself out then and want to go to bed."

"It's a mercy," said Mr. Mole, "for which I am devoutly thankful. Make fast the window, Harvey. I will fasten the door, and we'll adjourn to another apartment. Be sure you fasten the window. I should not like Mrs. Mole to be interrupted."

"No fear, sir; only isn't it rather heartless, not to say brutal, to leave her like this?"

"Harvey," replied Mr. Mole, "I have no hesitation in saying that you're a humbug."

"Say it again, sir," answered Harvey; "we're old friends, and I shan't punch your head."

They left Ambonia in her hysterical fit, and locked the room up.

On a table in another apartment were some very fine shell-fish resembling enormously large oysters.

They had just been brought up from the seashore, and laid open in their shells for Ambonia's refreshment.

"Ah! oysters! big ones, though," remarked Mr. Mole. "Try one, Harkaway."

Jack looked at the shell-fish and took one up.

It was about fifty times the size of one English

yster, and he did not know how to get it into his mouth.

"How am I to do it, sir?" he asked.

"Bolt it," suggested Harvey.

Jack made an effort and the oyster disappeared.

He gasped for breath, and Harvey patted him on the back with a large board.

"How do you feel?"

"Very thankful it's down; and even now I can't help thinking I've swallowed a small baby," answered Jack. Harvey laughed, and Jack continued: "Ta, ta, sir; I must toddle."

"Don't leave me, Harkaway. Why go so soon?" said Mr. Mole.

"Urgent private affairs, sir."

"You have rendered me a service. You have soothed the savage breast, Harkaway, and it is the only gleam of sunshine I have yet had in my married life."

"Sorry I can't stay, sir," answered Jack. "You must knock under."

"There she is again," cried Harvey.

As he spoke a furious yelling was heard, and a desperate kicking at the door of the room in which Ambonia was shut.

"I'll leave you to it, sir," exclaimed Jack, with a laugh.

In vain Mr. Mole tried to stop him.

Taking Harvey's arm, he left the house, and the happy couple within it.

CHAPTER XXII.

JACK WON'T TAKE ADVICE.

As JACK and Harvey proceeded towards their own house in Tompano, the latter could not fail to perceive that his friend was full of thought and care.

"Has anything happened?" he asked.

"No," replied Jack, rather more sharply than Harvey liked. "What should happen?"

"You need not snap me up like that. I only asked kindly, but I forgot that you went away with that old witch hag, and I dare say that has upset your royal highness."

"Suppose it has, what then?"

"You are more of an ass than I took you to be. She is a rank impostor, and is said to be friendly to the Pisangs. Has she advised you not to undertake the invasion, warning you that you would be beaten?"

Jack made no answer.

"Oh, if you have lost your tongue, and don't like to speak, please yourself," said Harvey. "I'll talk to Monday."

"Don't be annoyed, Dick," exclaimed Jack, at last. "I can't tell you what passed between Nuratella and myself."

"Why not?"

"Because I promised I wouldn't."

"That is a pity. Two heads are better than one," said Harvey; "and I might be able to advise you. Not that I want to know anything out of idle curiosity."

"No; you never did, Dick," said Jack, with a smile.

"That's what I call a nasty snack," replied Harvey.

"Well, you know you were a nice cup of tea at Craw-cour's, Dick; and if you could get to the far end of anything, you always did."

"You mean to say that I was a regular old washer-woman. That's not kind, Jack, and I did not expect it from you. If we are to be really friends, there ought to be perfect confidence between us."

"So there should be; and so there shall be. Only wait for to-night," rejoined Jack. "I'll tell you all then."

He shook Harvey cordially by the hand, and the latter's wounded dignity got better.

"I don't think you mean to worry me," he said.

"Still I wish you would take my advice."

"What is it?"

"Don't listen to anything that old hag says."

"Too late. I have made her a distinct promise," replied Jack.

"Are you going to meet her again?"

"Don't ask me any questions, Dick, there's a good fellow, because I can't answer them."

"Very well; I'll dry up," was Harvey's response.

When they reached the house, they found Monday, whose eager face denoted that he had important news to communicate.

"Oh! Mast' Jack," he exclaimed, "there have been um fight; um sea fight."

"Where?" asked Jack.

"Off the island. Two boats Pisangs meet one boat Limbians. They fight quite close here."

"Which licked?" questioned Harvey.

"Um Pisang lick, 'cos they more number; though we kill one, two, three, four."

He counted his fingers as he spoke.

"Killed four, eh? And the others got off. What did they want cruising round our coast?" said Jack.

"There's mischief brewing," remarked Harvey.

"We'll double the guards round the city to-night," said Jack. "It won't do to be surprised."

"I don't like those fellows being so near us. It doesn't look healthy," observed Harvey.

"Nor I. It isn't rosy, and it is like their cheek to risk it."

"They kill three our men; others came back with news," Monday went on.

"Did they see Hunston with them?" asked Jack.

Monday nodded his head violently, as he always did when excited.

"Yes, they say white man chief—Tuan Biza white face with them," he answered.

Jack walked up and down the room impatiently.

"I don't half like it," he exclaimed, as if talking to himself. "There is something in all this."

After a time, feeling fatigued with the heat, he threw himself down upon a rude bed, telling Harvey that he should be obliged if he would rouse him at sunset.

He was soon asleep.

In a couple of hours the sun sank to rest, and Harvey touched him on the shoulder.

He jumped up, uttering the name "Emily."

"You're dreaming," said Harvey.

"I believe I was," replied Jack, rubbing his eyes. "I thought Emily was by my side."

"Are you going out?" asked Harvey, as he saw him put on his cap.

"Yes; I shant be long. Don't funk about me."

"I can't help it. You're going to see that witch Nuratella. It's no use denying it."

"You're welcome to your own opinion, Dick," replied Jack.

"Well," answered Harvey, "God bless you, Dick. I wish you would take my advice, that's all, or"—

"What?"

"You might let me come with you, if there is any danger."

"But there isn't."

"I am not so sure of that. Nuratella has been suspected before now of playing her own people false. The Pisangs have been seen off the island this very day. Hunston was with them; and, hang it all, if there is any danger, you might let me share it with you."

"You've got a good heart, Dick, and I am very grateful to you. However, don't fret on my account. I shall be all right," replied Jack.

Squeezing his friend's hand, he rushed out of the house, leaving Harvey gazing with pity after him.

He took the direction of the witch's dwelling, and was soon out of sight.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE MEETING.

NURATELLA was anxiously awaiting his appearance. Still sitting on the rugged stone, she did not seem to have changed her position since he left her.

"Well, mother," exclaimed Jack, "here I am, like Regulus returning to Carthage—though, as that is a little beyond your comprehension, I will say that I resemble the bad penny which is sure to turn up, whether it is wanted or no."

"Are you alone?" she inquired.

"Yes."

"You have no one within call?"

"Not a soul."

"Good!" exclaimed the old woman, over whose forbidden countenance stole an expression of satisfaction. The shades of night had fallen with the rapidity peculiar to the tropics after sunset.

It was difficult to discern objects at a few yards distance.

Nuratella clapped her hands.

Once, twice, three times.

At the third signal a fairy-like form stepped out of a thicket of trees to Jack's right, and though the light, airy European garments were torn and travel-stained, he knew that a country woman of his own was near.

How his heart throbbed at that moment.

"Emily," he ejaculated.

The form halted when close to him, and then as if obedient to an irresistible impulse, she threw herself into his arms.

"Oh, Jack," she exclaimed, "under what circumstances do we meet again?"

"They're not very lively, certainly," he said. "But I am so delighted at seeing you that hardships vanish, and I seem to be treading on enchanted ground."

"I have so much to tell you," she continued, "though I am afraid I ought not to waste precious time."

"Tell me, at least, how you came here."

"It was decided by the Pisang council that I should be given up to the Limbians, where a man named Hunston informed me that I should meet you."

"That is unlike Hunston. He's not usually so generous," said Jack, musingly.

"And it is unlike the treatment I have received all along on the Pisangs. My father is dying, I fear, from their ill-usage."

"Mr. Scratchley?"

"Yes, and my poor mother went down in the wreck."

"Have you any reason to think there is a plot hatching against us?" asked Jack.

"Indeed I fear so," returned Emily; "for we came over to Limbi, as we call this island, in two boats, full of armed men."

"And you encountered a hostile boat, which you drove off?"

"We did."

"How were you conducted hither?" asked Jack.

"By Hunston, and one they called Tuan Biza. They brought me here, and left me with this old woman, who told me to remain in the thicket till she clapped her hands."

"What became of your guides?"

"They said good-bye, and left me. I cannot understand their generosity; it seems too good to be true. But had we not better fly at once?" said Emily.

"At once. We will talk at our ease. Take my arm, dear Emily. We shall soon be in Tompano. It is not far off. I know every inch of the way and once amongst friends, we can enjoy our newly found happiness."

Emily placed a trembling hand on Jack's arm, and without taking any further notice of Nuratella, who, by the way, had disappeared, they turned to make their escape.

Suddenly dark forms appeared behind them.

A voice exclaimed: "Not so fast my fine fellow. You and I have a score to settle."

Jack's heart leaped in his bosom.

"Betrayed, by Heaven!" he cried.

He faced the foe, but ere he had time to draw a weapon in his defense, a heavy blow on the head felled him to the ground where he lay insensible.

Emily uttered shriek upon shriek.

Her misery was complete when she saw Jack borne off by the Pisangs through the darkness.

It was for her sweet sake that he had ventured into this ambushade.

The Pisangs, with serpentine cunning, had made her a decoy.

"Stop that noise!" exclaimed the harsh voice of Hunston, as he seized her brutally by the arm.

"Oh, do not kill him," she replied.

"Not yet. I'll make him feel his position and suffer a little first. Come along; you've done your work, and we must get back to Pisang."

Again Emily uttered piercing shrieks.

"Hold that row, miss," exclaimed Hunston again, "or I shall have to hit you on the head as I did King Harkaway. Be quiet, for your own sake; you will neither do yourself nor your friend any good."

Emily remained silent, and was hurried along a narrow path which led to the coast.

"Did you think," continued Hunston, "that I was such a very innocent baby as to give you up to the only man I hate like poison?"

"I did not know what amount of villainy you were capable of," she answered.

"You'll know in time. You'll find it all out when you're my wife."

"Heaven defend me from such a fate. I would die sooner!" she cried, horror-stricken.

"You'll have to do one or the other. Death or marriage. Take your choice when the time comes."

Emily shuddered.

"It was not a bad dodge of mine to get Harkaway into our power," he went on with a loud laugh.

"It was mean and cowardly to use me as a means of entrapping him."

"All's fair in love and war. I knew he'd nibble at the hook if you were the bait at the end of it."

"What will be his fate?" she ventured to ask.

"Death! A cruel, horrible and lingering death, unless"—

"Unless?" she repeated under her breath, as her companion broke off abruptly.

"Unless you consent to be mine."

His fierce, gray eyes seemed to pierce her soul in the darkness.

"Then he must die, and I will perish with him," she murmured.

As the words left her lips a feeling of faintness came over her, and she would have fallen had not Hunston caught her.

She lay like a log in his arms.

He carried her insensible form for the remainder of the distance.

The Pisangs were waiting for him.

Springing into the boat which was nearest to him, he gave the word and the sails were set.

One boat contained Harkaway, the other his beloved Emily.

They were both in the power of Hunston, from whose tender mercies they had as much gentleness to expect as the dove receives from the cruel hawk.

It was an infamous stratagem.

But at the same time it was a clever and important capture.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HARVEY GETS UNEASY.

THE hours glided by and nothing was seen of Jack.

Harvey began to grow uneasy, as did Monday.

"Something happen to Mast' Jack. What um be?" asked the black.

"I more than half suspect that treachery has been at work," replied Harvey.

"Where him go?"

"I am nearly sure that he went to see Nuratella."

"She bad woman, sare," said Monday. "We all much afraid Nuratella, because she um witch-prophetess."

"Wasn't she a friend of the Pisangs once?"

"Yes, one very great friend Tuan Biza, and now she go to their island in um boat."

"Do you know where she hangs out—where she lives, I mean?" asked Harvey.

"Yes, Monday him know."

"All right. Let's lie down till daybreak, and we'll go and look after him. Poor Jack! I shall never forgive myself if anything had befallen him. I ought to have followed with half a dozen rifles, whether he liked it or no."

In spite of Harvey's impatience, nothing could be done in the dark.

He slept little, and he was up as soon as the first rays of light streamed through the mat-covered windows.

"Now, Mon, look alive!" he said.

"Alive him is, sare," replied Monday, yawning.

They ate a piece of rough bread and drunk some water, then they were ready for the start.

I did not take them long to reach the witch's dwelling.

She was nowhere about, and they supposed had not yet arisen.

"What's this!" cried Harvey, casting his eyes on the ground.

The object that attracted his attention was a piece of

paper, such as might be torn from the pocket-book of a European.

On it was written in pencil:

"English, by Jove!" he said; and in a lady's handwriting too."

He did not hesitate to read its contents, which ran thus:

"I, Emily Scratchley, having fallen into the hands of the Pisangs, have been liberated by them to-day, and left in concealment in this thicket, until an old woman shall give me a signal that my old friend Jack Harkaway, who I hear is on this island, comes to take me to the chief town of Limbi.

"Feeling doubtful about the good faith of the Pisangs, whom I have since my captivity found cruel and treacherous, I fear some villainy is intended, and write these hurried lines in the hope that some friend may find them, in the event of any foul play taking place."

Harvey set his teeth tightly together.

"I see it all now, Monday," said he.

"What him all 'bout, sare?" asked the black.

"Nuratella has helped the Pisangs to take Jack a prisoner."

"Mast' Jack taken! That bad news. But we go after him and librate him, or we kill and burn all Pisangs."

"Of course we will, but they may kill him before we get there."

"Look here, sare! Mast' Harvey, come here, quick! See um blood on the ground!" cried Monday, excited at the red looking spots he saw.

Harvey came to his side, and regarded them mournfully.

"It's as clear as daylight," he observed; "Jack's been taken by surprise, and they've tapped his ciaret for him. Well, it can't be helped."

"Matabella go to King Lanindyer, and he make Nuratella say all she know," said Monday. "No one like her. All glad she die."

"I'd roast her over a slow fire. Does she live in that kennel?"

He pointed to the hovel as he spoke.

"That where she lives."

"Have her out, Monday. We'll take her back with us to the town, lest she gives us the slip, and goes to join her precious friends the Pisangs."

Monday hung back.

He could not forget the superstitions of his youth, and the prejudices of his nation.

"What are you afraid of?" asked Harvey, contemptuously.

"She put some charm on me. Nuratella very great witch. She make and unmake storms. She held the lightning in her hand," replied Monday, trembling.

"Go on, you great cake!" said Harvey. "I'll dig her out, witch or no witch, or I'll burn her den about her ears."

Putting his shoulder against one side of the hut, Harvey gave it a shove, which made it rock like a poplar in a storm.

"Come out, you old cat!" he said in the native language.

There was no answer.

Not being in a humor to be trifled with, Harvey gave the hovel another shove, and down it went in a heap.

Presently the form of Nuratella appeared from a thicket a few yards off, the same in which Emily had been concealed, and from whence she had watched the destruction of her house with rising wrath.

"Why do you come to my dwelling and scatter ruin around?" she asked.

"I am quite ready to answer for what I have to the Tuan Biza of this island and his chiefs assembled in council," replied Harvey.

"Do you not fear my power?" asked Nuratella, still more threateningly.

"No more than that," said Harvey, snapping his fingers.

"I could make the earth open and swallow you up. I could call down the lightning from the sky, and summon wild beasts from the forest, together with venomous serpents, to destroy your life."

"Go ahead, then. Let the music strike up and the show begin," exclaimed Harvey.

Nuratella glared at him with the savageness of a tiger.

"The fact is you are an impostor," continued Harvey. "I repeat that I am ready to answer for what I have done and mean to do, though I don't think you will get off so easily."

"Go, rash boy," she exclaimed. "I have no quarrel with you."

"Oh, it's like that, is it?" Harvey said, derisively. "You find that you can't frighten me, so you slacken sail. Now it's my turn. I don't boast of what I can do; you'll see in time. So come along with me."

He seized her by the arm, and attempted to draw her along.

But she threw herself on the ground and refused to stir.

Like most sailors, Harvey generally had some cord in his pocket.

This he produced, and quickly tied her hands and legs together.

Then he ordered Monday to lift up her head, while he took her feet.

In this way they carried her to Tompono, in spite of her cries, struggles and protestations.

They proceeded at once to the king's palace, where the king and his chiefs were assembled in council.

A large crowd followed them, hearing that Nuratella was a prisoner, and that the white chief had mysteriously disappeared.

Harvey demanded an audience, which was granted to him.

Leaving the witch in the passage guarded by Monday, he entered the great hall.

All eyes were instantly turned upon him, for alarming rumors had already reached the council.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE WITCH'S DOOM.

BOTH Harvey and Jack possessed great influence over the savages of Limbi.

Cruel and vindictive as they were to their enemies, they possessed the invaluable properties of gratitude.

The boys had saved and treated kindly Matabella, the heir apparent, the son of their Tuan Biza, the Prince of Wales of Limbi.

This was sufficient in itself to make them popular.

In addition to this, they had given them powder and shot; they were going to lead them against their old, old enemies, the Pisangs.

We can fancy the English in the days of their hatred to France, when war was waging, hailing an ally in a similar manner.

Besides this, the boys were not at all haughty in their manner.

They did not show or boast of their superiority in cultivation, and the arts of civilization.

On the contrary.

They made friends with the simple islanders, and endeared themselves to one and all.

Mr. Mole who no one knew exactly why, was accounted a great chief, had married two princesses.

It was gravely debated whether or not he should have a third wife.

The Limbians thought they could not have afforded him a greater honor.

Mr. Mole, thought otherwise.

He had certain domestic reasons of his own for thinking so.

But he had not yet found out the secret of governing a wife.

The Limbians did not hesitate to lay a bamboo cane across the shoulders of their refractory spouses.

Mr. Mole had yet to make that important discovery.

Unlike the Chiefs of the Red Indians, about whom we have read so much, the inhabitants of the great Indian Archipelago were fond of talking.

They did not confine themselves to the utterance of grunts, and the guttural "yah, yah!" with which we have been nauseated.

They were genial, and, what is more, they possessed a good deal of sound common sense.

Harvey told his tale as clearly and shortly as he could.

He had to struggle with and keep down his very natural indignation at the outrage to which his friend Jack had been subjected through a Limbian woman.

He translated the letter that Emily had written, alluding to the meeting with Nuratella, and ended by declaring his conviction that she was the authoress of the mischief.

After some consultation the chiefs were of the same opinion.

The religious men or priests who were members of the council had long been patrons of Nuratella.

It was their barbarous custom once a year to sacrifice a human being to the evil spirits.

The time was at hand.

They were searching for a victim.

The custom was, after the harvest of corn and fruits, to carry a certain quantity of sugar cane, rice, fowls, eggs, pigs, dogs, and a living being to the southeast point of the island.

The wretched creature selected for these rites were left on the shore, bound hand and foot, for the crocodiles to devour.

After the consultation of the council, Nuratella was ordered to be brought in.

She was unbound and surrounded by a strong guard, which rendered her escape impossible.

Some of the chiefs feared her fabled power, but the majority did not evince any emotion.

When the case was stated to her she made no reply.

Harvey stood up and said:

"The silence of Nuratella is proof of her guilt. I demand her life shall be taken, as in all probability my poor friend by this time has ceased to exist."

"Confess," exclaimed the king, Lanindyer.

"Of what use would it be for me to make any confession, when you are all hungering for my blood like a pack of wild beasts," she replied.

"Do you deny the charge which has been brought against you?" asked another chief.

"I do," she replied.

"Let her be put to the torture," said the king.

"No," said Harvey. "Let her suffer the penalty of her crime, but torture would be barbarous."

"I have said it," answered the king, calmly. "Let the officers do their duty."

Nuratella was dragged into another apartment, and her cries were soon heard at intervals.

She was beaten with bamboos.

Fire was placed under her feet.

Red-hot stones were applied to various parts of her body, and a band of twisted reeds was tied so tightly round her forehead that her eyes threatened to burst from their sockets.

At length her fortitude, great though it was, gave way.

She confessed her intrigue with the Pisangs.

She admitted that she beguiled Jack to her house on purpose to betray him, and she declared that she alone was to blame in the matter.

When this was made known, the indignant council

clamored loudly for her instant death. The cry was taken up by the populace out of doors.

Protected by the soldiers, she was led, accompanied by almost all the inhabitants of Tompono, to the seashore.

Near this fatal spot was the mouth of a small river, where the crocodiles were wont to assemble in large numbers.

She was securely bound and laid upon the beach.

When the procession started, Harvey ran to Mr. Mole's house, and found him looking out at the doorway, while Altura and Ambonia, who had made friends again, were anxiously looking at the crowd.

Mr. Mole had succeeded in restoring peace, for a time, to his distracted household, and he listened to the alarming rumors with impatience.

He hailed Harvey's arrival with delight.

"I say, sir," cried Harvey, "come along!"

"Come where? What is all this? Why fret the angry crowd, so I think my friend Horace has it?" replied Mr. Mole.

"Haven't you heard the news?"

"Not I."

"At least if I can't save Harkaway, I will avenge his death!" exclaimed Harvey.

"Dear me. Is Harkaway in danger? Don't say that! With all his faults he was a fine fellow. Don't tell me, Harvey, that he is!"

A tear sprang to Mr. Mole's eyes.

He could not pronounce the word "dead."

"Come with me, sir," said Harvey, "and I will tell you all about it as we go along."

Harvey quickly told Mr. Mole the distressing news.

"The wretch!" exclaimed the latter, when he heard of Nuratella's treachery, "she deserves to die, but I wish they wouldn't do the thing in this cruel way. I think I shall interfere and stop it."

"Stop your grandmother!" replied Harvey.

"But an execution ought to be properly conducted."

Mr. Mole walked along thoughtfully.

They were in the rear of the crowd, but the shouts of the people were distinctly audible.

The doom of the witch had been decreed. Execution was to follow soon upon judgment.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PREY OF THE CROCODILES.

PRESENTLY Mr. Mole said:

"Hunston is with these Pisangs, is he not?"

"Yes, and directs all their councils," replied Harvey.

"I thought so. Well, surely Harkaway's life will be safe in his hands."

"Will it?—over the left," answered Harvey.

"Do you mean to tell me that he will not spare an old friend?"

"You know all about the tattooing, and how we had to kick him out after he tried to murder us, and how he made an attack on the castle?"

"Yes, I have heard of those things."

"Is it likely, then, that he'll show Jack any mercy?" answered Harvey. "I believe Hunston has become as ferocious a brute as any one of the Pisangs he is amongst."

"Do you, indeed?" said Mr. Mole.

"I do, and I think he would not hesitate to eat Jack if the others did."

"That's going a little too far, Harvey," said Mr. Mole with a half smile.

"By mixing with savages may not a man get savage himself?"

"I hope we are not so."

"I mean a vicious man," replied Harvey.

"Let us hope that Harkaway is in no danger, and that he will be restored to us."

"I wish I could think so. I fear, however, we shall only find his head in the house of some chief. At all events, I shall hurry on the expedition for the invasion of Pisang."

"Do so, by all means," rejoined Mr. Mole; "and now I recollect that a short time ago, I elected to remain here as governor of the island in the absence of the fighting men."

"That was your wish, sir."

"That is so no longer," continued Mr. Mole. "When one of my companions, one of my dearest friends, I may say, is in danger in a foreign country; a boy whose mind was educated under my own personal supervision, I cannot remain idle."

"Bravo, sir! You're a trump!" cried Harvey.

"Harvey, do you know my motto?"

"No, sir. What is it?"

"It is," said Mr. Mole, "death before dishonor." I may not be a fighting man, but I will hurl spear and draw trigger for Harkaway."

"Good again, sir! You're made of the right stuff."

"And I shall get away from my wives," continued Mr. Mole, as if speaking to himself.

"Oh! that's it, sir!" said Harvey, laughing.

"What did I say?" asked Mr. Mole, in some confusion.

"Nothing, sir," replied Harvey. "Here we are."

Mr. Mole looked up, and beheld a vast concourse of people on the seashore.

The pushed their way through the crowd, the soldiers making room for Tuan Biza of the white man.

A ring of armed men kept the throng back from a certain point.

Nuratella was already lying bound on the sand, the hot tropical sun streaming down unmercifully up on her upturned face.

Her youth had been a guilty love.

Her life had been an imposition and a cheat.

Her death was to be an atonement.

The people were at such a distance from the shore, that they could only see the dim outlines of the wretched victim.

The chiefs were assembled in a group somewhat nearer.

To these Harvey and Mr. Mole attached themselves. As the tide rose, the bodies of the crocodiles could be seen rolling sluggishly up and down.

Presently they would scent their victim.

Then her end would draw near.

Not far off was the river of which we have spoken, and which drew the rainfall down from the hills.

As the water began to circle in ripples round Nuratella, the excitement of the onlookers was intense.

Scarcely a word was spoken by the vast assembly.

Occasionally the priests uttered a low, monotonous chant.

At length two crocodiles saw the body and advanced towards it.

There was a snap of the huge jaws, and a dreadful shriek.

This was repeated.

Nuratella's cries redoubled as first an arm and then a leg was torn away.

Other crocodiles, attracted by the smell of blood, approached.

Soon the cries ceased.

The witch was still, and though the cruel fangs of the monsters tore her flesh, she felt them not.

Nuratella was dead.

Turning to Harvey, the king said:

"Are you satisfied?"

Harvey had turned his head away from the sickening sight.

"Yes," he muttered, feebly.

A gong was loudly beaten as a signal that justice had been done.

Loud shouts rent the air, and the crowd, who had just before thrilled to their marrow of their bones, experienced a sense of relief.

"Let us get out of this," said Mr. Mole.

He and Harvey retreated along the shore, and tried to forget what they had seen by listening to the ripple of the waves as they broke on the beach.

"At least she deserved it," remarked Harvey.

"No doubt; but it was horrible for all that. I thought I should have fainted when that first crocodile took off her leg with as much ease as a surgeon at an hospital would amputate a limb."

"I've no pity for her," said Harvey. "I've only got to think of Jack, and I shouldn't care if she had got to die again."

"Remember, Harvey, what you said about people living amongst savages and becoming like them," said Mr. Mole, warningly.

"But isn't it enough to make a fellow wild?" began Harvey impatiently.

"No, it is not enough," interrupted Mr. Mole. "We are told to forgive our enemies seventy times seven."

"Then you'd better forgive Mrs. Ambonia Mole the next time she goes into her tantrums and tears your hair."

Mr. Mole was silent.

"That's a closer," thought Harvey.

As they neared the city they were met by Monday, who had come out to look for them.

"Well, Monday, old man," exclaimed Harvey, "what's your opinion of things in general?"

"Not up to much, sare. Me miss Mast' Jack. Me grieve much. Monday very bad."

"So am I, and that's the truth."

"The king has decide to start to-night with all men for Pisang. That good news," continued Monday.

"Has he, though? Then your governor's a brick, Monday," cried Harvey, joyfully.

"Yes," said Mr. Mole; "that is indeed cheerful intelligence, and I will solace myself with a drink of that rum I see sticking out of your pocket, my worthy, but somewhat dusky friend."

Monday had a flask in his pocket, for he had thrown an old jacket of Harvey's over his shoulders, the sun being very hot, and Monday not being disinclined to clothing when he could get it.

"Me not know, sare," he replied; "it Mast' Harvey's old jacket, Monday take him."

Mr. Mole received the flask, drank once, and then took another dip, and sighed deeply, while he put the flask into his own pocket.

"Circulate the liquor, sir!" exclaimed Harvey.

"Ah, pardon me! It was a fit of abstraction," being detected in his base attempt to appropriate it all to himself.

The spirit was afterwards handed to Monday, and they all felt exhilarated by it.

"I begin to think," said Harvey, "that Jack won't be a croaker just yet. I'll bet a new hat!"

"Which you want badly, Harvey, that I must say," interposed Mr. Mole.

"Ditto, the same to you, sir," said Harvey, laughing; "not to make any unkind remarks about your continuations."

"What's the matter with my trousers? I hope nothing has gone amiss with them," exclaimed Mr. Mole, in alarm.

"There is only a hole as big as a besom, sir, in the rear."

"Dear me, what an unfortunate thing. Does my coat-tails cover it?"

"When the wind doesn't blow. As you're a householder since your marriage, sir, it doesn't matter, because you've got your 'rent' ready!" exclaimed Harvey.

"Ah! well, I suppose we shall have to resort to the garments of our first ancestors, which we have authority for believing were chiefly fig leaves," replied Mr. Mole with a sigh.

"You interrupted my observation, sir," continued Harvey, "which was, that I'd make a bet Jack fogged the niggers somehow. He's clever."

"I hope sincerely he may. However, we will haste to the rescue. Monday!"

"Yes, Mist' Mole; what up now, sare?"

"See to my pistols, will you? And first take care that my rifle is not overloaded; I have a great horror of a gun that bursts."

"All right, sir! Monday, him see to that."

"You may leave it all to Mon," exclaimed Harvey. "He'll put you straight, and send you out to the fight like a warrior of old, up to the knocker."

"I wish we had armor in these days. It would be a great protection," Mr. Mole observed wistfully.

"A bold spirit is the only armor a brave man requires," replied Harvey.

"By the way, did your spear-wound hurt much?"

"Didn't it?" said Harvey. "I should think it did, just."

"What was it like?"

"Like? Oh! like having all your muscles pulled out one by one by machinery, and then having them put in again."

"Ah! war is a dreadful thing; nevertheless, I will rescue our somewhat rash and foolhardy friend, Harkaway. You shall receive an example from me, Richard."

"Thank you, sir," replied Harvey, dryly.

When they reached the town they were sent for to the council.

The chiefs had decided upon an immediate attack.

After some discussion, it was found that the men could not be got ready, embarked, and disembarked on the island of Pisang for a few days.

There was much to be prepared, and it was not advisable to risk defeat by indulging in too much haste.

Even Harvey, impatient to be up and doing, and to strike a blow for his friend, was obliged to admit that.

Mr. Mole accompanied Harvey to his house, and a fresh bottle was produced, for, though the store of liquor was running short, Harvey carefully concealed and took care of what they had left.

In a short time Mr. Mole got what Harvey called "jolly," with his frequent attentions to the bottle, and was only prevented from singing a song by being reminded that Harkaway was in danger.

At length Harvey rose, and said:

"I won't say your room is better than your company, sir, but I must make myself scarce."

"Why break up our little party?" asked Mr. Mole.

"I don't like keeping a married man out, that's one reason; and another is, I have to drill an awkward squad of soldiers before sunset."

"Ah, duty before all things. I will not detain you, Harvey."

"And, as I don't want my castle stormed, I think you'd better be stepping t, sir, or you'll have the rival beauties after you."

"Mist' Mole should use um stick," observed Monday.

"What's that my valiant black?" asked Mr. Mole.

Monday brandished a stout bamboo, and replied.

"All Limbi men beat their wives. You beat Ambonia, sare and then you see."

"Is it so? A good suggestion. I'll follow your advice, Monday, and apply the rod."

Mr. Mole took the stick which Monday offered him, and went away.

"I say, Monday, are you up to your larks with Mole?" asked Harvey, when he was gone.

"Yes. Monday have um lark with him," was the reply.

"Do the Limbians beat their wives?"

"No; only sometimes. Ambonia never beat in her life. Won't Mist' Mole catch it?" said Monday, grinning.

"Hot and strong, I expect," replied Harvey, who could not help laughing at the prospect which awaited the proprietor of a tea-garden in China.

When Mr. Mole reached his house, he found his wives sullenly awaiting him.

Alfura said nothing.

But Ambonia asked him where he had been, and why he stopped away from them.

Mole was just sufficiently inebriated to be valiant, and he replied:

"To see the execution, my dear. Fine thing an execution! Crocodiles fine; Nuratella fine."

"We went also, but we have been back some time," answered Ambonia. "You have been somewhere else."

"Only stayed to crack a bottle with a friend. English custom, my dear."

"And what is that stick for?"

"For you, my pet," replied Mr. Mole.

Ambonia made a dash at him, and attempted to seize the stick.

Mr. Mole brought it down sharply over her naked and unprotected shoulders.

"Must be firm," he muttered. "Monday told me to be firm, and I will be firm."

"With a kind of howl, Ambonia sprang upon him, and grasping the stick broke it into two pieces.

"Playful creature?" exclaimed Mr. Mole, with an imbecile smile.

Ambonia seemed to be determined to let him know whether she was in play or not, for she began to beat him unmercifully with the biggest end of the bamboo, which remained in her hand.

Mr. Mole fell on his knees before her, unable to withstand the torrent of blows.

"Ambonia," he said, "be merciful as you are strong; that stick hurts."

"You have hit a princess of Limbi," she replied.

"It shall not occur again."

Thwack, thwack, descended the stick on his head and back;

"Behold me, Ambonia, on my knees," he said. "I repeat, behold me, for it is a sad sight! I am a great chief who has cut off heads in battle."

Ambonia danced before him in derision.

"And moreover," he added, "I am going to the wars with the Pisangs. You may never see me again."

This declaration altered the complexion of affairs. Alfura's tender heart melted, and she endeavored to calm Ambonia.

The Limbian women had a great respect for warriors. When they were satisfied that their husband was going to fight, they lifted him on a seat, and sat round him.

"Ambonia will sing the white chief the deeds of her ancestors," she exclaimed.

"Yes, do; that's sensible! By all means let us hear the song," said Mr. Mole, glad to escape so easily.

While Mrs. Mole, No. 2 sang to him in a tone of voice not altogether unpleasing, her husband pillowed his head in Alfura's lap, and soon slept the sleep of the just.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MONDAY'S NEW CLOTHES.

THOUGH Harvey was gratified at the punishment which Nuratella had received at the hands of the Tuan Biza, he was ill at ease.

In vain he tried to sleep.

The night was warm and sultry, but towards morning a heavy storm of rain, accompanied by thunder and lightning occurred.

This lasted about an hour with all the violence peculiar to such tempests in the tropics.

After this, the wind rose and blew in fitful gusts.

Harvey thought he heard the sound of big guns being fired.

From the direction of the sound he imagined that they came from the sea.

They were discharged at intervals of a minute.

Nothing is more exciting than to hear a ship in distress fire the minute gun at sea.

As soon as day broke, he went into an adjoining apartment and roused Monday.

The black was soon on his feet.

"What um up to, Mast' Harvey?" exclaimed Monday, as Harvey gave him a poke in the ribs to wake him up.

"I want you to go down to the shore," replied Harvey.

"What for? Mast' Jack come back?"

"I wish to goodness he had; no such luck. But I fancy some ships have been driven on the rocks. Guns have been firing."

"P'raps you been dreaming, sare," said Monday.

"No; I haven't been dreaming either, so you are out there," replied Harvey, who had been like a wasp ever since Jack disappeared. "If I didn't go to sleep, I couldn't sleep, could I?"

This argument was convincing.

"Monday be off like um shot," cried the black.

"Don't be long! If I am right," said Harvey, "we will take a boat and go to the wreck, before your countrymen can know anything about it. Some lives may be saved."

Fortunately, Monday did not require much dressing, and was ready to start in less than no time.

An hour passed, during which Harvey paced the room impatiently.

He reproached himself with being inactive while Jack was in danger.

The Limbians were too slow in their movements to please him.

It appeared that before they started for the invasion of Pisang, the priests had to go through certain ceremonies, to bless the expedition.

During this delay, Jack might be killed by his enemies.

"I shouldn't care," thought Harvey, "if I could die with him."

It was a relief to his oppressed mind when Monday came back.

The black danced up and down in an extraordinary manner.

"Stop that hanky panky," said Harvey. "What are you cutting all these capers for, just for all the world like a bear on hot bricks?"

"Him one big ship, sare," said Monday; "not far from land, and him struck on um rock."

"Is there a boat anywhere near?"

"One boat, the one we have come from our island in, not far off."

"That will do. Just stay your dancing performance, and come with me. When a ship is wrecked, and the people may be dead or dying, it is no time for larking," said Harvey.

"Monday, him dance, because him think him get things."

"If you touch so much as a ship's biscuit without my permission, I'll skin you. Now then, lead the way; trot," replied Harvey.

Monday said no more, and they were quickly on the way to the shore.

The firing was over now, and the fate of the crew most likely decided.

With the utmost impatience, Harvey hurried on, and getting into the boat, set the sail, steering directly for the wreck of a merchantman, which seemed to be fast lodged in between two rocks about half a mile or more from the beach.

As he cast his eyes back, he saw two dead bodies stretched out upon the sand, looking ghastly white in the reddening sun.

"I'm afraid we're too late, Monday. They're all dead as mutton, I expect," remarked Harvey.

"What's mutton, sare?" asked Monday.

"Sheep."

"If um sheep, why call him mutton?" asked Monday, puzzled.

"I can't explain now! I've something else to think of. You've no sheep in your forsaken country, but if you ever come to England with us, you'll know all about it."

Monday was silent for a while.

Then he said:

"Great, much, wonderful place England, Mast' Harvey?"

"Rather! You'll say so when you get there. But would you really like to come with us, if we get a passing ship to take us off?"

"Yes, Monday him come."

"And leave your friends here?"

"Monday come back some time, and lay him bones in Limbi. Not like to die out of his own country," he replied, thoughtfully.

They had now reached the wreck, which was a China clipper of moderate tonnage.

The storm had done her fearful damage, and from her appearance she seemed to have been drifting water-logged for some days, so that she must have encountered more than one tempest, and have made bad weather before she was driven out of her track to Limbi.

Making the painter fast, Harvey sprang on board, followed by Monday.

Three corpses lay on the deck, and not a single living soul was to be seen above or below.

Perhaps the majority of the crew had taken to the boats before she struck, and had been carried away in an opposite direction, for there were some obstinate currents in the seas.

When Harvey satisfied himself that the crew were beyond his help, he went below and found that the cargo was chiefly tea and silk.

She was the "Johnny Sands" of London, and he could only deplore the fate of the brave fellows who had manned her.

"We may as well load our boat," said Harvey, "with such things as we want. Tea and coffee are luxuries we haven't had for a long time; powder and shot, if we can find any, will be useful, and a case of spirits will not be a bad present for Mole. Lend a hand, Monday, and let's overhaul the wreck."

Monday willingly complied, and in about an hour a couple of chests of tea, a case of spirits, some wine, a bag of coffee, a keg of powder and some shot, and various other little articles, none the worse for water, were handed on deck.

Harvey packed the boat as full as it would hold, and made free with some seamen's chests containing clothes, as his own were becoming rather ragged.

When all was ready for a start, he looked round for Monday, who was nowhere to be seen.

"Where's the beggar got to?" he muttered.

Going to the companion-ladder, he shouted—"Monday!"

"Coming, sare," replied Monday. "Give um moment."

"I'll give you a hiding if you keep me waiting," replied Harvey. "What are you doing below there? If I catch you swigging!"

"Monday no swig, sare," replied a voice from the depths of the ship. "Him only rig himself up!"

"Do what?" said Harvey in surprise.

"Him all right, Mast' Harvey; him right boot not fit. Never mind. One will do. Blow him right boot!"

"What on earth is he talking about?" thought Harvey.

Presently Monday made his appearance, and Harvey could not help laughing at the singular spectacle he presented.

He had seen his young master overhauling the seamen's chests, and the idea occurred to him that he ought to do the same thing.

"Mast' Harvey him dress: why not Monday? Him dress also," said Monday to himself.

He tried to put on a pair of white trousers, but tore them in the attempt, and got his left foot into a top boot, which he found in the captain's cabin.

The right one was wet and wouldn't go on, so he managed to put one with side-springs on.

Upon his head he put a white hat with a black band round it, and this was perched a little on one side.

A white shirt was thrown over his shoulders and tied around his neck by the sleeves.

Finding a paper collar, he had stuck that on with a pin, and tied a black ribbon round it.

"Monday, old man, this won't do," said Harvey, as soon as he could check his laughter at his ridiculous appearance; "you are a regular swell."

"Sare!" exclaimed the black, drawing himself up.

"You're going it," replied Harvey.

"Monday go to England. When him go him dress. Why not Monday dress now?"

"I don't see any particular reason. You're all the cheese; 'quite up to the knocker,' as we say."

At this compliment Monday grinned, as if he was immensely gratified.

"Monday him what you call um swell," he said, regarding his only boot with complacency.

"I should think you were a swell," replied Harvey. "Niggers can do it."

"Why do you call me nigger, Mast' Harvey?"

"Because you are not white, and you're rather more greasy than you might be, only that's your misfortune and not your fault. You'd do well to sit over the wheel of an engine; it wouldn't want much train oil."

"Have him dress right?" asked Monday, not understanding Harvey's chaff.

"Slap up!"

"Monday, him feel rather funny."

At this Harvey burst out laughing again.

"You're all right," he said, "don't hurry your fat. You might as well have started two boots while you were about it."

"Him cuss boot not go on," said Monday, in a tone of vexation.

"Don't swear, Monday. Where did you learn that?"

"Mist' Mole, him swear when Ambonia go on at him. He say, 'cuss the women.'"

"Does he? That's very wrong of him," replied Harvey; and don't you follow a bad example. Jump into the boat; never mind the other boot. You'll do. You're up to the nines, and would make a sensation in Hyde Park."

"Monday, good Englishmans."

"Stunning. I never saw a better," answered Harvey, wishing to gratify his harmless vanity.

"That's all right," said Monday, smiling from ear to ear.

"I'll have you presented at court some day. It would read well in the papers. His royal highness Prince Matabella Monday of Limbi, present on the happy occasion of his finding a top boot and white hat, both rather the worse for wear."

Monday did not understand all this.

"But," he said, "now, Mast' Harvey, you chaff poor Monday."

"Chaff? I'm not chaffing. Ain't you a prince? And haven't you found a top boot and a white hat?"

"Yes, that all right."

"Dry up then, and I'll steer the boat while you look after the sail."

They embarked with the cargo, Harvey congratulating himself upon being first in the field.

Had the natives discovered the wreck first, they would soon have carried away everything that was worth having.

As Harvey looked at Monday the more absurd his appearance seemed.

"Why you laugh, Mast' Harvey?" asked Monday.

"Because I can't help myself, and shall burst if I don't," replied Dick.

"Anything wrong with Monday?"

"I've told you there isn't; you're a toff!"

"Why um laugh then? Monday think him better dress than you, sare. Him got no tear in him!"

But not knowing the name for shirt, or forgetting it in his excitement, he pointed to his covering.

"Oh, your shirt's fine," replied Harvey.

"No holes in him?"

"I know mine is more holy than righteous; never mind, Monday. I've got something in those chests, and I'll cut you out. You shan't take the shine out of me like this."

Monday laughed, and was evidently much pleased with himself.

"Him Englishman, now," he said.

"You've done the trick, Monday," answered Harvey. They'll take you for the British consul at least, if we get to Singapore."

They ran their boat into a sheltered nook, and left the contents within it, intending to send down for them when they reached Tompano.

At a short distance from the city they saw a female sitting under a tree.

In her hand she held a bottle of spirits, which Harvey recognized as one he had given Mr. Mole.

She had twined some flowers in her hair, which hung down her back in untidy masses.

"Look, sare!" said Monday, "that Missy Mole."

"So it is. What is she doing, I wonder?" replied Harvey.

Monday put his hand to his mouth, as if to signify that she had been drinking.

Her wild appearance seemed to bear out the truth of this suggestion.

"If she has been imitating her husband's example, we had better give her a wide berth," Harvey said.

Mrs. Mole Number Two, however, was too quick for them.

Jumping up, she ran with unsteady steps to Harvey and seized his arm.

"You make my husband drink," she exclaimed. "When he comes to you, he goes home and beat me."

"My dear lady," replied Harvey, I assure you I do all I can to stop him."

"No, no!" cried Ambonia, raising her voice to a high pitch; "you send him to me with a bamboo, and then he beat me."

"I'll swear I didn't."

"To-day," she continued, I have taken away his spirit, and I have tasted it."

"Is it good?"

Ambonia raised the bottle to her lips and took a deep draught.

"It goes like fire through the blood," she answered; but it has not taken away my senses. You are my husband's enemy, and thus will I punish you."

As she spoke she aimed a blow at him with the bottle.

He jumped on one side, and narrowly escaped having his head broken.

"I say," exclaimed Harvey, "stash it. Here Monday, speak to your amiable countrywoman. This won't do at all."

Ambonia danced around Harvey, and made a snatch at his hair.

She grasped it, and tugged away at it till Harvey danced too.

"Pull her off, Monday! Look sharp, or I shan't have a hair left."

"Monday come, sare."

Monday seized Ambonia by the waist and dragged her to the ground.

Harvey fell with her.

She loosened her grip, and turned her attention to Monday, whom she abused in fine style.

Harvey soon tied Ambonia's hands behind her.

She kicked and screamed, but was unable to help herself.

"I'll be revenged," she cried, with a hysterical sob. "I'll kill him."

"What we do with her?" asked Monday.

"I'll be hanged if I know."

"I s'pose we carry her home, sare."

"She's heavy," said Harvey.

"Never mind, sare. I take her head, you take her legs; we carry her like that."

If they had not decided to do this, it is doubtful whether Ambonia would have got home.

The whisky she had been taking had got into her head, and she staggered about in a ludicrous manner.

First she ran to Monday, and tried to bite him; then she ran towards Harvey, and tried to kick him, and then lost her balance, and fell gracefully on her back.

"Now's your time, Monday; lay hold!" exclaimed Harvey.

"Me got her, sare," replied Monday.

"Lie still, mum. It's all right," continued Harvey; "we don't wish to hurt you."

She was a good weight, and it was lucky they had not far to go. It was a ludicrous procession.

Ambonia screeching, struggling, and making horrible faces.

Monday fantastically dressed, and grinning like a baboon.

Harvey enjoying the fun, but rather wishing he was out of it.

At length they got her home, and gave her into the charge of Alfura.

Then they made their way to their own home, to which Mr. Mole had previously gone.

The news of the wreck had spread.

Mr. Mole had heard of the wreck, and was looking for Harvey, to know if he would go with him to the stranded vessel.

The Tuan Biza and many chiefs, had already started.

A wreck was a great event in those islands, and everyone, from the highest to the lowest, strove to get as much plunder as he could.

Suddenly Harvey and Monday met Mr. Mole.

"Hullo, sir!" cried Harvey, "Where are you pelt-ing off to?"

"There is a wreck, Harvey," answered Mr. Mole; and I am going to see what good I can do for the poor creatures. Won't you come?"

"We've been there, sir."

"Been there?" said Mr. Mole, stopping and drawing his breath quickly. "Are there not some casks of spirit on board?"

"We got a few, sir. You'd better make haste, or you'll be too late for your share."

"I'll stick up for my rights. Share and share alike in English, or at least Yorkshire. I'll have my rights, or my name is not Isaac Mole: but who, in the name of wonder, is the strange looking animal? Is he some one saved from the wreck?"

He pointed to Monday as he spoke, whom he did not recognize in his attire.

"That's the King of the Cannibal Islands," replied Harvey.

"Indeed!"

"Yes; he's eaten more men, considering his size and weight than any other of his nation in existence."

"What a dreadful creature!"

"Dance, you uncultivated beast!" cried Harvey. "Show the gentleman what you can do."

"And he began to sing:

"Hoky poky, wanky fum,

How do you like your taters done?

The King of the Cannibal Islands."

Monday stood still and obstinately refused to move.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Mole, "he looks to my imagination, like a wandering Christy minstrel out of work. Fancy his being an anthropophagos, or man-eater, as we should say at school."

"Don't irritate him by looking at him in that way, sir; he might do you an injury," said Harvey. "He's subject to fits."

"Fits! Bless me! Keep him off. I wonder at your fondness for such savage pets, Harvey. There is that wretched Monday, now!"

Monday showed his teeth.

He advanced to Mr. Mole with an angry look, fully entering into Harvey's joke.

"Keep him off, Harvey," cried Mr. Mole, in an agony of apprehension; "I don't want to hurt him."

"Prop him, sir!" said Harvey, delighted. "Don't funk him; prop him in the eyes! Give him a domino! I'll see fair play!"

"Perhaps he bites!" exclaimed Mr. Mole, drawing back.

Again Monday showed his teeth in a vicious manner. Mr. Mole got behind Harvey, saying:

"Protect me, Harvey. It is hard to be stopped in this way when I am hastening to the wreck to do Christian work."

"You needn't hurry, sir; the poor fellows are beyond human aid."

"Say you so? Then their belongings are lawful spoil, and that confounded Tuan Biza will!"

"Collar the lot, eh, sir?"

"Just so, Harvey; but I intreat you to protect me from that truculent-looking savage."

Harvey glided away, and Monday approached Mr. Mole threateningly.

Mole fell on his knees, and lifting up his hands, said "Good, kind Mr. Cannibal, don't do anything desperate. I'm only a poor schoolmaster. Don't eat me!"

"He'll only take a mouthful; he's not hungry," exclaimed Harvey, who was exploding with laughter.

Mr. Mole's distress was ludicrous in the extreme.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HARVEY'S RESOLVE.

SUDDENLY a gust of wind blew off Monday's white hat, which disconcerted him greatly.

"You've lost your tile," cried Harvey.

"Monday, him soon catch um tile," exclaimed the black, forgetting his assumed part of the King of the Cannibal Islands.

Mr. Mole's eyes were opened.

As soon as he saw Monday without his hat, he recognized him, and rising to his feet, said:

"Why, what sort of a trick is this, Harvey? Such deception is shameful. The poor creature is Monday."

"I could have told you that, sir," replied Harvey.

"Come here, you black thief," continued Mr. Mole, as Monday approached, having captured his runaway hat. "I'll thrash you within an inch of your life."

"Monday king; him eat um up, sare," answered Monday, who, however, kept at a respectable distance.

"I'll attend to you afterwards, my jocosely friend; at present I am engaged. I shall be late at the wreck."

"There is no occasion to go, sir," said Harvey. "I have secured all that is worth having. She is only a merchantman, laden with tea chiefly, and if you want a cask or two of rum or Hollands, you are welcome to them."

Mr. Mole shook him cordially by the hand.

"My dear Harvey," he replied; "my greatest consolation in this my exile, is that I have a friend like you so near me. Your words go straight to my heart. Where are the casks?"

"In our boat, sir."

"Is it safe? Will not the Limbian thieves deprive us of our lawful spoil?"

"They've got to find it first."

"Their noses are keen, and their scent sure. I wouldn't trust the descendants of Ham."

"Gammon!" replied Harvey, by the way of a joke. "The Tuan Biza would notice anything his people took. First come, first served, that's the law here; and I will say this for them, if their laws are few, they respect what they have got."

"With that assurance I will rest contented. I have over-exerted myself already in the morning sun, for no sooner did I hear the news than I hastened away—not for what I could get, Harvey, but to do good! Don't think for a moment I went for what I could get."

"Not you, sir. You'd put whisky in a bottle and throw stones at it."

"Well, I don't think that, exactly," replied Mr. Mole; "but I would not make capital out of the misfortunes of my fellow-creatures."

"Monday," cried Harvey, "cut on to the little village and get some fellows to bring the stores out of the boat to our house; and look sharp, or I pity you."

"All right, Mast' Harvey," said Monday, adding, "no eat Mr. Mole this time."

"You impudent black slave, begone; or I shall lose my temper and be tempted to play the part of Moses in Egypt," answered Mr. Mole.

"What that, sare?"

"What that, sir? Why this, sir," Mr. Mole answered, bringing a bamboo he carried in his hand with some force down upon Monday's posteriors.

Monday uttered a yell and put his hands behind him, as if to conceal the injured part, and then he started off at a run.

"Must be firm with these fellows, Harvey," said Mr. Mole, complacently. "Give them an inch and they'll take an ell. No foolishness. You see that I have tamed that savage, who, by the way, wouldn't be half so cheeky if you didn't encourage him."

"His hide's tough enough, sir. You didn't hurt him."

"Never mind. I did not wish to inflict any brutalizing punishment. All I wanted was to assert my authority; that done I am satisfied."

"Walk back with me, sir, will you; I want to have a talk with you," said Harvey.

"Certainly, my boy."

Side by side they retraced their steps towards Tompano.

"You see, sir," began Harvey, "I'm what the sailors call flummoxed."

"And what may that be?"

"Knocked out of time, upset, worried, bothered. I didn't sleep a wink last night."

"Why is that?" demanded Mr. Mole.

"Because I am so anxious on Jack's account. If I was with him, and could share his danger, I shouldn't care half so much."

"I too am deeply grieved at Harkaway's disappearance, but I make bold to hope that no harm has befallen him," replied Mr. Mole, gravely.

"He's in Hunston's power."

"Well, so much the better!"

"So much the worse you mean, sir. He'd have ten times more chance, if he had to deal with natives only," answered Harvey.

"I know Hunston to be bad and vindictive. He has little or no feeling. See how he kicked me, Isaac Mole, the proprietor of a tea-garden in China."

"And also proprietor of two wives in Limbi."

"Don't Harvey. If you love me, don't joke on that subject, it is a sore one," said Mr. Mole with a groan.

"Very well, sir; I won't," replied Harvey. "Something ought to be done to help Jack at once."

"Are we not going in force to rescue him?"

"We are; but by the time we get to Pisang we may find his dead body."

"Nonsense, Harvey; I cannot believe that Hunston could be such an abandoned wretch as to murder an old schoolfellow in cold blood."

"Wouldn't he? I know the beast better than you do," said Harvey. "That is just why I am fuming."

"The Tuan Biza will be ready to sail in two days from this time."

"Not now."

"Why not now?" asked Mr. Mole.

"Because there is a lot of drink on board the wreck, and the Limbians are not above temptation. They'll be on the spree until it's all gone."

"Do you think so?"

"I'm sure of it. Savages are awful beggars to lish, when they get the chance, and the chiefs will be as drunk as flies for a week. I can see that."

"Perhaps you are right," replied Mr. Mole, moodily.

"They respect us, and they like us," continued Harvey; "the prompt way in which they put Nuratella out of the way is a proof that they want to conciliate us; but, after all, Jack is not one of them, and it does not matter to them whether he lives or dies."

"Your reasoning is cogent, very cogent. What then do you propose to do?"

"This. I am determined to strike a blow for Jack at once, even if I lose my own life in the attempt."

"I commend your pluck, Harvey. Shall I accompany you? Harkaway is a dear fellow, and I will cast in my lot with you, even to the death, as you say," exclaimed Mr. Mole, animated with sudden and unusual valor.

"No; that won't do!" replied Harvey.

"You won't have me?" said Mr. Mole, secretly rejoiced; "and why not? Am I not worthy to fight in a good cause?"

"I want you to stay here, sir!" answered Harvey. "You shall do your share of fighting when the time comes, but the Limbians want some one to keep them bang up to the mark."

"Ah! I perceive."

"They have been badly beaten once or twice lately by the Pisangs, and they don't like attacking them without a white leader."

"Quite so."

"It may be a month," Harvey continued, "before they would invade Pisang of their own accord."

"Very possible."

"You are accounted a great chief," Harvey went on, "and have influence amongst them. They respect you, sir."

"And do I not deserve it, Harvey? Have I not always borne myself bravely when there was any fighting to be done?" asked Mr. Mole.

"Certainly, sir. You're a second Agamemnon. You can do it when you like; and I want you to stop here and organize the forces."

"That is just within the scope of my administrative ability. You could not have given me a more congenial task."

"See that they take proper supplies, keep their powder dry, and that every five-and-twenty men have their proper officers."

"And you?"

"I shall leave Limbi, with Monday, in a couple of hours."

"How?"

"In our boat," replied Harvey. "I can't stop here. Pisang is only a few hours' sail, and I may be of some use to dear old Jack."

"The odds are against you."

"Have they not always been against the man who has attempted a daring enterprise, sir?" asked Harvey.

"That is true. History abounds with instances of successful daring."

"Pat me on the back, sir, and tell me to go in and win," said Harvey.

"Of course I will. But here we are at your house. Let us have a glass—a parting glass, to drink success to your expedition!" exclaimed Mr. Mole.

"You are welcome to what you like, sir. As for me, I shall not touch a drop. I never drink when I have anything to do, and keep my head cool. A glass or two when you're ashore and on the spree is another thing," answered Harvey.

"As you please, my boy. My blood is colder than yours, and wants warming. I'll drink your share and mine too," said Mr. Mole.

Harvey placed a bottle before him, and said:

"Polish it off, sir; there's more where that come from. It's a pure spirit."

"So it is, Harvey, and there isn't a headache in a gallon of pure spirit," replied Mr. Mole, who soon made himself at home.

Harvey went away to look for Monday, and apprise him of the determination he had come to.

He knew that the faithful fellow would follow him to the end of the world if he asked him, and he was also sure that he could not propose any expedition to him which he would like so well as one to rescue Jack.

Monday loved Jack with all his heart.

It would have comforted Jack in his captivity, if he had known how wildly the two hearts were beating on his account.

CHAPTER XXIX.

AT HUNSTON'S MERCY.

For some time after he was knocked down, Jack did not recover his senses, and when he did, an acute pain at the back of the head informed him that he had received a severe blow.

Gradually the fresh sea air revived him, and the dizziness consequent to his hurt passed away.

The ripple of the waves against the sides of the boat, and the swarthy faces of the Pisangs, visible by the pale moonlight, sufficed to tell him that he was being carried into captivity.

He was furious at the thought of it.

Up to the present time he had been singularly successful in defeating Hunston's designs.

To be in his power and at his mercy was a reflection akin to madness.

However, Jack liked danger.

At school he always said that the fun of being in a scrape was getting out of it.

"As long as they don't knock me on the head entirely, I don't care," he said to himself.

Thinking that when the landing was effected, he would be taken to some prison, he determined to give them as much trouble as possible.

If he pretended to be worse than he really was and did not appear able to walk, they would have to carry him.

It was as he expected.

When they reached the coast of Pisang, he was lifted out of the boat, and placed upon a couple of planks tied together with reeds, and carried by four men.

The town called Palembang was reached before day-break, and Jack found himself deposited in a square-built bamboo house, thatched with palm leaves.

It was strongly built, and no doubt guarded outside.

As soon as he was left to himself, Jack took the bearings of his prison.

He tied his bandana handkerchief round his head to keep the air and the flies from his wound.

"I don't feel much the worse," he said. "Wonder what they're going to do with me."

He could see through the chinks in the wall that daylight had appeared.

"We used to sing," he remarked, "I shan't go home till morning." It doesn't look like going home at all. Suppose we have a look round."

Getting into a corner, he climbed up the bamboos till he reached the roof of his prison, which was made of sticks, covered with palm leaves.

It did not take him more than five minutes to push a hole in through these big enough to get his body through.

Then he climbed on to the roof, and, sitting down, took a survey of the city.

There were few people about, though numbers of houses stretched away in all directions.

At the door of the house, if the one-story bamboo hut was worthy of the designation, paced two sentries, armed with spears, and bows and arrows.

"It's no good trying to escape," thought Jack. "Not just yet at least. I should be seen, and there would be a hue and cry. Don't see why I shouldn't have a game though with one of those niggers."

Some pieces of rock were laid over a weak part of the thatch, to prevent the wind blowing it away.

Taking up a little bit, he threw it on the head of a drowsy-looking Pisang.

"Morning, old fellow. It's nice and airy up here," he exclaimed.

The soldier rubbed his eyes with astonishment when he saw Jack.

"You're a prisoner, and it's against the rules."

"Is it? Blow me, I shouldn't have thought it. What time do you breakfast in these parts?"

"You will have something when the other guard comes; but go down. You've no business up there," said the soldier, who wondered at Jack's speaking his language so well.

"Come and fetch me!"

"I'll call the white Tuan Biza," threatened the guard.

"Call him a thundering scoundrel, and you won't be far off," answered Jack.

Giving some orders in a low tone to his fellow-soldier, the Pisang went to a house a little distance, and presently returned with Hunston.

The latter looked very sleepy and very cross; his face, however, was not now disfigured by a single tattoo mark.

The stain was not lasting.

It had faded away.

"Come down off there!" exclaimed Hunston, savagely.

"Shan't!" Jack replied, coolly.

"Won't you, by George? Then I shall have to make you."

"Try it on, old son; you're welcome."

"Give me that spear," exclaimed Hunston to the soldier.

He took it, and cast it at Jack, who bobbed on one side, and very cleverly caught it in his hand as it was whizzing by over the thatch.

"That's one to me," he exclaimed. "Now, look here, if you try to knock me off my perch, I'll give you one for yourself, Mister Hunston."

The latter looked amazed at this cool effrontery.

"Don't you know you're a prisoner?" he replied.

"What of that? It may be your turn soon. By the by I'm glad to see that ugly mug of yours has improved a little since we last had the pleasure of meeting."

Hunston stifled a curse.

"You shall have an ornamental phiz before I'm done with you, and one you'll never get rid of," he said.

"How's that?" asked Jack, unconcernedly.

"Because you'll carry it down to the grave with you, in a brace of shakes."

"Thank you; much obliged, I'm sure," replied Jack.

"How's your mother?"

"Come down off there," thundered Hunston.

"Not if I know it. I shall stay here until breakfast's ready, and then I'll descend. Pray give me something nice; I'm rather hungry."

Hunston foamed at the mouth with rage.

"Fine city, this!" cried Jack, surveying the town with a critical air. "But not a patch to Tompano. Pity we shall have to burn it about your ears."

"We?" repeated Hunston. "I don't think you'll have much to do with it."

"Don't you? Well, it's only a difference of opinion, and yours isn't worth much. I say, how's the Tuan Biza?"

"He's right enough. Come down!"

"Not by any manner of means. Can't afford it. Can't be done at the price; how's Keyali?"

"You know deuced well he's wiped out. We found his body stuck through and through with knives."

"His own fault. He was a plucky fellow, but, like you, a little too headstrong," said Jack.

"Will you come down?" shouted Hunston, who was beside himself with rage.

"Not much; unless you behave like a gentleman, and take my parole."

"What's that?"

"There," said Jack, in a tone of mock compassion, "you see the necessity for learning when one's young. I always thought your education was neglected. You should have made better use of your time. *Didicisse artes*—I forget the rest, but I will risk Mole for your edification; I'll make a note of it."

He took out his pocket-book and coolly wrote, reading as he put it down:

"Mem. Ask Mole as to quotation—something—*artes*—to coach up Hunston."

"However," he continued, putting away his book, "I'll explain parole. It means that I will give you my word of honor, not to hook it if you will let me walk about the city."

"You haven't got such a thing as honor."

"Don't judge others by yourself, old boy. Never mind; it don't much matter, I'm very jolly where I am. Best part of the day, morning. Nice cool air—breeze—not much sun."

Jack played with the captured spear.

"Fool!" hissed Hunston through his teeth. Don't you know you're at my mercy?"

"No, I wasn't aware of the fact," replied Jack, innocently.

Hunston gave the guard some additional orders, and stalked away to his house, unable to contain himself any longer.

CHAPTER XXX.]

TRUE TO HIS COLORS.

Having succeeded in annoying Hunston, which was all he wanted to do, Jack crept through the hole and sat down on the floor of the prison.

Presently the guard was changed, and something to eat and drink was brought him.

"Only a loaf of bread and some water," he muttered.

"Well, that's better than nothing; and there is one comfort in it—they don't mean to eat me, or they'd fatten me up a bit first."

A few hours glided by, and he began to feel very miserable.

Suddenly the door opened, and Emily came in.

"This is a gleam of sunshine," he exclaimed.

"Emily, you are as welcome as the flowers of May."

"Oh, Jack," she replied, tearfully, "can you ever forgive me for getting you into this trouble?"

"It was my fault. I ought to have been more wide awake. Why, I haven't thought about it since last night."

"But they will kill you!" she answered.

"Will they? When?"

"To-morrow morning. It is all settled. A council has been held."

"How are they going to do it?" asked Jack, feeling curious as to the mode to be adopted in putting him out of the world.

"You are to be hanged at daybreak. I can hardly find courage to utter the dreadful words," said Emily, with a shudder.

Jack put his head on one side and let his tongue hang out of his mouth, as a pantomimic way of describing the tragedy.

"Oh, don't joke, Jack dear," she replied. "It is too horrible; and to think that it is all my fault."

"All through my love for you, eh, Emmy. Never mind, darling; they won't find me show the white feather," Jack exclaimed, firmly.

"I don't think there is much chance," she said.

"Is there any?" he inquired, regarding her earnestly.

"Ye-es."

"What is it?"

"Hunston says he will spare you, if I—I will marry him," replied the girl, blushing.

"Hang his impudence, Emma," answered Jack, indignantly. "You marry a sweep like him. Don't you do it. I won't accept my life on those terms. I thought you cared for me."

"So I do, dear Jack. I love you, very, very much indeed."

She threw herself on his breast and wept bitterly.

"I have no one to think of but you now, since father died," she went on.

"Is Mr. Scratchley dead?"

"Yes; he died yesterday, while I was taken to Limbi; all through Hunston's violence. He struck him, and he never got over it."

"Did he? That's another chalk to Hunston," said Jack, savagely.

"I didn't expect to meet you in these islands, and when I heard you were also wrecked, I thought what a pleasant meeting we should have, but how bitterly I have been deceived."

"I knew you were here, Emma," said Jack.

"How did you find it out?" she asked, checking her tears, and looking up.

He told her about the message from the sea.

"How wonderful things happen," she exclaimed.

"Poor papa got very needy after you left us, and he resolved to emigrate. Fancy our meeting here so many miles away from home!"

"I came over to Limbi principally to rescue you," continued Jack, "for I heard that a white girl was saved from the wreck and a prisoner among the Pisangs. After reading the message, you know, I guessed it was you."

"How can I thank you? But look here, Jack dear, I have brought you a sharp Malay knife, which I stole from the Tuan Biza's house."

"Thank you. What shall I do with it—cut my throat

and disappoint the Pisangs?" he said, concealing the weapon in his waistcoat.

She smiled sadly, for she knew he was not in earnest.

"You are still the same old Jack," she replied, "fearless in the midst of danger, and ready at all times to laugh at death."

"Why shouldn't I? Being miserable won't mend matters! Shall I set down and cry? But tell me how did you get leave to come and visit me?"

"I begged permission from Hunston, and he wouldn't give it me until—until—"

"Well?"

"I let him have a kiss. I didn't mean to, Jack. It was only a little one after all; don't be jealous!" she said, bashfully.

Jack set his teeth together.

"That's another chalk to Hunston. I'll have it out of him," he exclaimed.

"It felt like the touch of a snake, Jack dear," she went on.

"So I should think. The brute, to think that he had a kiss, when I haven't dared to ask for one. May I though, Emmy, may I?"

"You know you may, Jack—a dozen if you like."

And Jack did like.

He construed this into permission to help himself, and he covered her pretty face with kisses.

"There, Jack," she said, pushing him away; "that will do. Don't be stupid."

"That's a nice thing to say to a fellow who's got to dance upon nothing to-morrow morning," he rejoined.

"Oh! there's another thing, Jack," exclaimed Emily;

"I forgot to tell you. Hunston is coming here to examine you presently."

"Is he? What about?"

"The plan of the Limbian attack, which they expect soon. The number of men and firearms; and if you tell them, they will promise you your life, though they don't mean to keep their word any the more for that."

"I shouldn't suppose they would. They're all thieves and liars. I shan't split on my party, so they wouldn't have got a word out of me, even if you hadn't told me."

"Spoken like yourself, Jack. Be true to your color. I shouldn't like you if you weren't," replied Emily.

"I've got one comfort," continued Jack, "and that is you will be safe."

"How?"

"We're sure to lick them—at least Harvey is. He will fight like a Turk for me, and you will be rescued."

"Harvey, who was with you at Crawcour's? Is he at Limbi?"

"Rather. Alive and kicking too, and as good a friend and as fine a fellow as ever lived," replied Jack.

"But without you—oh! Jack—without you, how could I—how can I live?" sobbed Emily, her fears overcoming her again.

"Don't worry, Emmy dear!" he replied, kissing away her tears. "The beggars haven't done it yet; they've got to do the trick."

"Can you help yourself?"

"I think so. There is plenty of time between this and to-morrow morning."

"To do what?"

"To cut my stick. If I'm not mistaken, they'll find the cage door open and the bird gone," he said.

"Have you got any plan?" she asked.

"Not yet. I've got to think it over: ideas generally come when I want them. I'm not going to stop here, to be strung up like a dog, that's flat."

"You put new life into me, Jack," replied Emily, joyfully. "Oh, if you only could escape!"

"Wouldn't it be a lark?" Jack went on. "Hunston would have a fit, and he wouldn't be able to sleep, night or day, for thinking of the reckoning he'd have to pay me."

A head was put in at the door.

"Time's up," cried the voice of Hunston.

"Good-bye, Emily," exclaimed Jack, pressing her hand, and giving her a wink which was intended to reassure her, and make her believe that he was quite prepared for anything that might happen.

She returned his farewell, and stepped, with as much bravery as she could summon to her aid, into the open air.

The door closed again.

But Jack was not alone.

Hunston stood leaning against a post, with his arms folded, and regarding Jack with an air of gratified malignity.

CHAPTER XXXI.

KEPT IN SUSPENSE.

"I SUPPOSE you've come to crow over me," exclaimed Jack, annoyed at his visitor's sullen silence. "Go on; I can stand it."

"It won't be for long," replied Hunston. "We are going to settle old scores, Harkaway."

"If you'd any generosity, you'd forget and forgive," answered Jack.

"It is not my nature to do either the one or the other. You've made me suffer, and you shall die to-morrow morning. I'd hang you to-day, in sight of all the people, only I want you to think over what I'm going to tell you."

"What's that?"

"You love Emily. Don't deny it. I remember at school that she was your playfellow, and you grew up together."

"I don't mean to deny it," replied Jack.

"It wouldn't help you if you did, for I shouldn't believe you. Well, chance has thrown you both into my power. You shall die, and when you're dead, I will make Emily my wife."

Jack made no reply.

"Do you hear me. My wife?" continued Hunston.

"Think of that!"

The shaft went home.

In the imperfect light which reigned in the bamboo house, Hunston could see his former companion writhe and bite his lips till he quivered with the pain.

"She shall see your body blackening in the sun, and the birds of prey picking your flesh from the bones."

"You're a cowardly bully, to come and exult over me like this," replied Jack, forgetting his assumed indifference.

"It's a part of my revenge. I knew it would come some day. I've worked and waited for it."

"I was a fool," said Jack, "not to have shot you when I had a chance."

"Perhaps you were. However, you've lost the opportunity, and you've not likely to have another," replied Hunston.

"You might think of one thing," replied Jack, "and that is, I saved you from the Pisangs when you were bound to the stake."

Hunston smiled sardonically.

"You wouldn't have done it if you could have foreseen this day," he said.

"Yes, I would," answered Jack. "I would, upon my word. I could not see a former friend in distress, and not help him. But it's no use talking to you. One might as well speak to a stone for mercy."

"I don't know the word. Still I might be induced to spare your life," remarked Hunston, carelessly.

"On what terms?"

"Tell me the plan of the Limbian attack, for our spies have informed us you mean to invade Pisang in force."

"You got that from Nuratella."

"Never mind where the intelligence came from. We can rely upon it."

Jack thought of what Emily had told him.

"Nothing would induce me to betray my friends and allies," he exclaimed.

"Nothing? Think a moment. Life is sweet."

"Not on such terms," answered Jack, resisting the voice of the tempter.

"Die, then! Die like a dog, as you deserve!" said Hunston, in a rage: "and think over all I have said to you."

"Get out!" cried Jack, "or, prisoner as I am I'll punch your head."

Hunston stepped back.

"Touch me!" he exclaimed. "If you dare lay so much as your little finger on me, I will have you seized, and your flesh torn off with jagged stones made red-hot."

"Coward!" was all Jack ventured to reply.

"I go," continued Hunston, "but you will see me at your side to-morrow morning when you are executed, and I hope that my presence will add one more drop to your cup of misery."

"Thank you," replied Jack; "I am not afraid to die, and the prospect isn't half so bad as being obliged to be shut up here with such a beast as you."

Saying "to-morrow!" Hunston left him alone, and Jack brightened up a bit.

"I can breathe now that serpent is gone," Jack said to himself. "What a relief—he's worse than a snake to me."

The day passed, and they brought him neither provisions nor water.

His fate being decided upon they did not seem to take any further notice of him, knowing that he was well guarded.

"I'll take a squint sound, and see what's going on," thought Jack.

He climbed up the wall, as he had done before, and got on the roof.

In an open space before Hunston's house some men were busily at work with poles.

They were making a huge gallows.

"That's for me," said Jack.

And then he thought what a triumph it would be if he could only get away, join his friends, capture Palembang, and hang Hunston on his own gallows.

Presently he saw the Tuan Biza going by.

"Hi!" he cried. "Tuan Biza, hi!"

The chief looked up in astonishment.

"It's all right," cried Jack. "Hunston said I might take the air; but I'm very thirsty. Chuck us up a cocoanut or something."

Apparently satisfied that, Hunston having given him permission to get on the roof, there was nothing wrong, the Tuan Biza gave orders that he should be supplied with what he wanted.

"They will bring you something presently," he said.

"And some grub. What do you call it in your lingo?"

"Prindu; that's it. Send me a small parrot, or a bit of pork, cold. I see you've got some likely pigs running about loose," continued Jack.

The Tuan Biza nodded, and passed on.

When Jack saw some Pisangs coming with refreshments, he descended again, and began to attack the viands with a good appetite.

"That's something like" he muttered, "I wanted food. It will set me up for the work I've got to do to-night."

His face assumed a determined expression.

Throwing himself on the ground in a corner, he closed his eyes.

But he did not sleep.

His brain was at work, and he was thinking how he could outwit his enemies.

The gallows he had seen had an ugly look, and the thought of it quickened his perceptions wonderfully.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY.

HARVEY had not long to wait for his trusty followers.

He came toiling along with about a dozen other Limbians, heavily laden with the spoil of the wreck.

They brought the packages and cases into the house, and laid them down.

"Excellent," said Mr. Mole, rubbing his hands. "You are a capital caterer, Harvey. Truly my heart rejoices within me at the sight of all these good things."

"Help yourself, sir! You can unpack them when we are gone," replied Harvey.

"I will not fail to do so."

"There is one thing I should like you to do, sir."

"You have but to name it, my young friend."

"There are several bodies of Englishmen, some washed ashore and others on the wreck."

"Yes!"

"Have them brought on shore, and see them decently buried, will you?"

"Certainly, Harvey; a most proper request. I will see the last obsequies paid to my unfortunate countrymen. Their bodies shall be brought up to-night and interred to-morrow," replied Mr. Mole.

"Now, Monday, look alive!" continued Harvey.

"What um Monday do now, sare?" asked the black.

"First of all, take off those toge."

"Take off um beautiful dress? No, sare; not if him die for it!" replied Monday in alarm.

"But you must! You can keep them for Sunday; that hat will make a splendid Sunday-going beaver. You and I start soon."

"Start for where, Mast' Harvey?"

"To go after Jack. He is in the hands of the Pisangs, and we must see what we can do for him. If you wear those things, you won't have freedom of action on the war path!"

"Go after Mast' Jack?" cried Monday, delightedly. "That's 'nother thing, sare; Monday undress, and get um ready."

"I knew you would. I'd have sworn you'd go like a bird, after Jack?"

"Like one, two, three, bird, sare. Go anywhere and do anything for you and Master Jack?" said the savage, who, under his dusky skin, had as good a heart as ever beat beneath a white one.

"Get the boat ready at once; put in any dried stuff you can lay your claws on, and bread, with some fresh water, enough, say, to last us a fortnight."

"All right, sare," replied Monday, running off.

Mr. Mole was overhauling what he called the "salvage."

"Glorious salvage, Harvey," he said, opening a case of Hollands. "The Dutchmen know what is good; this is veritable schnaps. I feel I want taking up a peg or two. We must sample this, Harvey."

"Peg away, sir. It's all your own," replied Dick.

"Very good; I will proceed to do so. Splendid fellows, those Dutchmen! They manage to put a true taste of smoke into their whisky, which is what I like. I will drink to the independence of Holland."

Mr. Mole did so, and found the liquor so good that he repeated the experiment.

Harvey busied himself in making up a few packages, and was favored with Mr. Mole's critical approval.

"Be careful," he said, "to take plenty of powder and shot. The only argument these savages understand, is, as we used to say at school, the *argumentum ad hominem*. An ounce of lead is a powerful persuader!"

"I know all that," replied Harvey. "Don't bustle me, sir."

"Reject my advice, if you like. I know I am right, and I have your welfare at heart."

"Coach up those Limbians then, sir, and come over to Pisang as soon as you can; we shall have hot work, and Jack will want friends."

"Which he shall find."

"I am going to tell the chiefs of my depart-

ure, sir, and shall be off in a twinkling. Good bye!" said Harvey.

"Good-bye, and God bless you, my brave boy! I will take care of your belongings here," replied Mr. Mole.

They shook hands, and Harvey hurried off. He had determined to try and save Jack at all hazards.

The Limbians were sorry to lose his leadership, but they promised to obey Mr. Mole, whom they regarded as a great chief.

And they also undertook to start on the expedition as soon as possible.

They had made great progress in their drill, and proved themselves expert shots.

Joining Monday, Harvey hurried down to the house to get his packages.

"I will see you off!" cried Mr. Mole. "I do not mind walking with you now Monday has taken off his grotesque dress, but if he were disguised as he was a short time back, I should have thought I was walking in the Zoo with the chimpanzee or the ourang-outang's brother."

Harvey began to hum. "The O. K. thing at Limbi is walking in the Zoo!"

"Ah!" said Mr. Mole, with a sigh. "What a thing youth is. I wish I had your spirits, Harvey."

The latter pointed to an empty bottle, and replied:

"I think you have had your share, sir."

"I mean animal spirits, Harvey. You have mistaken my remark."

Mr. Mole rose as he spoke, and staggered a little to one side.

"Dear me," he said "this is odd; I appear to have lost my center of gravity!"

"Groggy on your pins, oh, sir!" replied Harvey, laughing.

"Rather so, my juvenile, but still intelligent friend. There is an inclination in my right leg to go sideways. This is more than odd—this is passing strange."

"Mind the wall, sir," exclaimed Harvey, as the late senior master of Pomona House came into violent collision with the bamboos.

"Your warning came too late, Harvey; I have collided, that is to say struck, and the effect is painful."

"Which was the hardest, sir; your cocoa-nut or the wall?"

"Much of a muchness, Harvey," replied Mr. Mole, sitting down on the floor. "I do not think I will go with you, yet I hope you will manage to effect a start without my valuable assistance. I have over-fatigued myself to-day, and exhausted nature must have rest. Fare-thee-well!"

His head fell back, and he was soon snoring "thirteen to the dozen," as Harvey said.

Harvey and Monday, laden with packages, now made their way to the coast.

It was growing late, and darkness would soon fall.

They got into the boat, and, hoisting the sail, began to leave Limbi behind them.

"Do you think you can manage to steer all serene at night?" asked Harvey.

"Monday know him way, sare," replied the black.

"All right. I leave it to you; but don't run us into any danger."

Night fell, and Monday, looking at the stars, kept the boat's head well before the wind.

They were both armed with revolvers and knives, while rifles lay at the bottom of the boat, ready for use at a moment's notice.

It was clear that if they encountered twenty Pisangs they would not be taken at a disadvantage.

Their firearms would give them a superiority, provided they were not struck by spears or arrows.

In the use of the latter weapons all the natives of those islands were very expert.

The night passed quickly, as it does in those latitudes, and Harvey snatched a few hours' sleep.

He dreamt that he saw Jack hanging on a

high gibbet, with his enemies singing war-songs around him.

Waking in a fright, he found himself bathed in a cold sweat.

On the verge of the horizon was a dark speck.

"That's land, Monday!"

There was no answer.

Monday, worn out, had fallen asleep, and the boat had drifted at the mercy of the wind and waves.

It was lucky that the breeze was not a strong one, or they would have capsized.

They were traveling at a rapid pace towards the land, and it was evident they had been caught in a current, which set in strongly to the shore.

Shaking the black, Harvey succeeded in rousing him.

"Where the dickens are we?" said Harvey.

"Monday go to bed. That bad. Mast' Harvey him kick Monday, who much 'shamed," said the black, looking crest-fallen.

"Never mind; I suppose you couldn't help it. I shan't bully you, though you deserve a blowing-up. Do you know what island that is ahead of us?"

Monday shook his head.

He was out of his reckoning.

"This delay is vexatious," continued Harvey. "Every moment is precious, Jack's life may hang by a thread, as they say. Why the deuce couldn't you keep your swivel eye open?"

"Monday big stupid donkey; he worse than um child."

"I suppose we'd better run in and see. If it isn't Pisang, we must start again."

"Look!" cried Monday, as they neared a dangerous reef of coral.

"At what?"

"That post, sare. That one flagstaff. This our island; what we call Ship Island, you know. that where you save Monday from him enemies."

Harvey looked again, shading his face with his hand.

"You're right," he replied. "That's Mr. Mole's signal station. It is our island. Shall we land?"

"If got time, sare."

"It won't make above an hour or two's difference, and we can take our bearings."

"See um old castle, Mast' Harvey; that much jolly!" cried Monday, in delight.

"Yes, I should like to have a look at the old place."

"Monday him like it too. We very happy in um old castle, Mast' Harvey."

"We hadn't much to grumble at, if Hunston and his savages had let us alone. Do you think you could start afresh, now you know where you are?"

"Start from here, sare? Easy."

"And make Pisang."

"Pisang over there; many, much miles away," replied Monday, pointing to the northwest, after taking his bearings.

"All right, steer steadily. Run her through the reef, and we will have a squint round," exclaimed Harvey.

They had christened the boat "The Jack Harkaway," and riding the waters like a thing of life, she bounded joyously along, as if glad to revisit the old spot that gave her birth.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

REVISITING THE CASTLE.

There was little difficulty in passing the reef during daylight, and it was with mingled emotions that Harvey stepped on that shore where he and Jack had landed, the latter taking possession of the island in the name of Queen Victoria.

Walking first to the signal station, he saw that the wind had torn the flag to rags, which fluttered feebly if not sadly in the breeze.

He then proceeded to the castle.

Nothing was to be seen but its blackened

remains, for the fire kindled by the Pisangs had done its work effectually.

Some of the trees were throwing out tender shoots again, but the trunks were bare and black.

Everything of utility or value had been carried off.

It was a scene of wreck and desolation.

The birds have played havoc with the corn, and other creatures had routed among the potatoes, until the farm was like a wilderness choked up with weeds.

The skeletons of the Pisangs who were killed by the explosion lay on the ground, whitening in the sun.

"Who would think," said Harvey, "that this was once a flourishing little settlement?"

"Him look wild enough now, sare," returned Monday.

Harvey strolled on a little further.

Before him was Maple's grave.

He remembered how tenderly they had laid the poor misguided boy in his last resting-place, and a tear fell from his eye.

The little mound was overrun with rank grass and weeds.

They had planted flowers upon it, which were choked by the luxuriant growth of the tropics.

The rough wooden cross, which Jack had in the piety of his heart erected, had fallen on one side.

Stooping down, Harvey took out his knife and cut away the grass and weeds, trimming it round neatly.

Then he replaced the cross, and firmly secured it.

"If ever I see his mother," he thought, "she will ask me about her boy."

He did all he could to respect his memory, though that was little enough.

He was engaged in a perilous and desperate enterprise, and he did not know how soon he might be in a similar position.

Stricken down in his youth, and laid low in the cold unsympathizing ground, with no kind hands to deck his grave and shed a tear to his memory.

It is in times of danger, and in the hour of solitude, that the thought of death affects us most.

Who shall say that death does not lose half its terrors when we know that weeping friends are around us, and that sincere mourners will bear our body reverently to the grave?

Sinking on his knees, Harvey prayed shortly but fervently.

He prayed that the poor dead boy's sins might not be remembered against him.

He supplicated that he might be forgiven for his bad faith, and his desire to injure those who had endeavored to be kind to him.

When he rose to his feet and returned to the ruins of the castle his face was wet with tears he could not suppress.

Monday had been watching him and said:

"Why you cry, Mast' Harvey?"

Harvey made no reply.

"Why you let fall tear, sare? Why you kneel down there, and put your face in your hands?" continued Monday.

"You don't understand our religion, Monday," replied Harvey. "That's a grave!"

"Some one dead lie there, sare!"

"Yes, a friend of mine; not much younger than I am."

"How did he come to die, sare?"

"Perhaps I killed him. I know not. It was either Jack or myself, but we were fighting in self-defense. It is a sad story, Monday," said Harvey. "We won't dwell upon it. Let us get back to the boat, and go on with the work we have in hand."

Monday held his head down, as if he wished to sympathize with his master's grief, and they slowly retraced their steps to the seaside.

Suddenly they heard a sound like the growling of a mastiff.

Though Harvey had been some months in the Archipelago, he did not understand noises made by animals half so well as Monday, who had been bred and born amongst them.

He was about to advance, when Monday laid his hand upon his arm.

"What the blazes is the row now?" asked Harvey, annoyed at the interruption.

Monday pointed to a clump of trees on one side of them.

"Tiger!" he answered, with an evidence of terror he could not conceal.

"Oh, Jerusalem!" replied Harvey. "I fancy I could wop my weight in wild cats, but tigers are pussies of another color."

They both started back.

The growling increased in intensity.

Placing his mouth near the ground, the monster's noise reverberated around until the dreadful roar could be heard for miles.

When the king of the forest is in a passion, every living thing is stricken with terror, even the birds ceased singing.

No sound broke the stillness of the air.

Presently the beast emerged from her cover, and Monday declared she could smell human flesh.

She was a magnificent tigress, about four years old, and Harvey could not help admiring her beautifully-marked skin, as she walked up and down under a tree, lashing her striped sides with her long tail, which she sometimes threw right over her back.

"I have seen them do that in the Zoo," said Harvey, in a whisper, as if speaking to himself. "That's just how they go on before feeding time. She's getting excited. Softly, my pretty dear; I am coming."

All at once she stooped the fore part of her body, put her ears back, and opened her huge cavernous mouth.

"Stand close, Monday," said Harvey.

He levelled his rifle, for he thought she was going to spring.

Monday trembled too much to allow his fire to be of any use.

With his quick eye Harvey saw this, and continued:

"Don't shoot. Hold your gun ready for me, if I don't stop her."

Monday could only nod his head, and Harvey heard his teeth chatter.

He had no time to say more.

Away she flew, making a splendid bound of many feet, eyes flashing, jaws open, paws outstretched.

Harvey took steady aim, and let her have his one barrel full in the chest.

Monday now recovered his presence of mind, and violently pulled his young master on one side.

It was lucky he did so, for the shot did not stop her.

Had he remained where he was, she would have alighted straight upon him, so well had she calculated the distance, and her own power of springing.

Seizing Monday's gun, which, unlike the rifle, had two barrels, and was a breech-loader, Harvey fired twice quickly, not daring to take regular aim, and make a "pot-shot" of it from the shoulder.

He had dropped his own piece, and the infuriated creature fell upon it with a plunge, growling over it like a cat with a mouse.

She laid hold of it with her massive teeth, and twisting it as if it had been a straw, broke it in half.

Then she jumped up, staggered a few feet toward Harvey, and fell down dead.

He waited for a minute or so, to see if she was really done for, and feeling satisfied, that she was past further mischief, walked up to her, and fired a revolver into her head.

"That will make sure," he said.

Monday also came up and began to make faces at the dead tiger, just as if she could understand him.

He danced before her, spit at her, kicked her in the side, and pulled her ears in childish spite.

"What's the caper now?" asked Harvey.

"That beast is dead."

"Tigers, sare, kill many Limbi people," replied Monday, "that's why me frighten. Now I tell her what I think of her."

And he began to abuse her and all her family, especially her father and her mother and her children and her cubs if she had any.

"You're a neat thing in niggers, to go on like that," exclaimed Harvey, laughing.

"We believe," replied Monday, "that the tiger spirit listen to us. Ah!" he continued, "you old wretch, how many Limbians you eaten—how many Pisang! Your father is a coward, he fly away from a monkey; your mother never fight fair, and your family not worth one pig."

"Shut up," said Harvey. "You can't be such an ass as to think that the tiger can hear you. I thought you had thrown off your old superstitions. Try and be more sensible."

Monday did not speak any more, but he shook his head, as if he had his own opinion about things in general, and that in particular.

"I should like that skin," continued Harvey.

"Set to work and skin the beggar, and look slippery over it."

Monday produced his knife, and soon had the creature's handsome skin off.

He rubbed it with sand to clean it, and Harvey hung it over the boat to dry in the sun.

"If ever we get back to Limbi, I'll keep that as a trophy. *Spolia optima*, Mole would say," remarked Harvey.

Having embarked, they set sail, and by dint of tacking against the wind made fair progress.

Monday declared that he knew his way, and that he would reach Pisang before night.

"If you go to sleep again, I will pound you," said Harvey.

"No sleep any more, till land in Pisang, Mast' Harvey," replied Monday.

"Mind you don't, that's all."

Harvey was dreadfully nervous about Jack.

He feared that he was in great peril, for he knew Hunston's character, and his influence over the Pisangs.

Jack was an enemy to be got rid of, for various reasons.

Nuratella had told the Pisangs that an invasion was thought of, and that Jack as the heart and soul of the Limbians.

Therefore, to kill him and get him out of the way was half the battle.

"Only let me have a slap at them, and I'll give them what for," said Harvey between his teeth.

The adventure he had embarked in, however, was more hazardous than even he imagined.

It is one of the advantages of being young—or, shall we say, one of the disadvantages—that we do not stop to consider the consequences.

Young people usually act upon impulse, and impulsive actions are very often successful.

Monday was right as to the duration of the voyage.

It was no longer than seven hours, and they reached an island, which he declared to be Pisang, before night fell.

Running the boat ashore, Harvey jumped out, and said:

"What's to be done now?"

Monday did not know.

"I'll leave all to Mast' Harvey," he said.

"Where him go, Monday follow."

"There is such a thing as going into the lion's den, and I don't mean to do that," answered Harvey.

"They have one big town like us," continued Monday; "it call Palembang. Once we have small towns."

"Villages!"

"Yes; but when war come all villages burn, now we all live together. Our town call Tompano, their town Palembang."

"Then there is not much chance of finding any one in the wilds. Shall we camp in the open, and keep watch, or sleep in the boat?"

Monday could not offer an opinion.

He was not at any time very brilliant, and was rather formed for obeying than leading.

He had come to rescue Harkaway, and would fight for him, but how to set about rescuing him he knew no more than a baby.

"I think," said Harvey, after some reflection, "that we had best camp in the woods, and

work our way up to Palembang in the morning. You speak the same language as they do, you are all a species of Malay. Can't you get into the town, and find out what's going on?"

"Yes, sare; Monday do that, though they cut um throat if they catch him."

"But you musn't allow yourself to be caught; we can't spare you, Monday."

"When um go? Now?" asked the worthy fellow.

"On consideration, no," replied Harvey. "We'll wait for morning, which will come in a few hours, and then we will work our way into the interior."

Hiding the boat as well as they could, they took a good supply of arms and ammunition, and made a camp in the woods, formed of the boughs of trees which they tore down.

"You slept last night; it's my turn now. Though, in fact, we were both in fault," exclaimed Harvey.

"Monday take first watch, sare."

"All right. Keep your weather eye open, and kick me at the slightest sound."

Harvey was soon asleep.

Monday stood with his gun tightly clasped, listening for the least noise with an eagerness that the danger of their position rendered necessary.

He was sorry for his fault the night before, and wished to make amends.

They were in the enemy's country, and the least cessation in vigilance might cost them their lives.

"Monday near eaten once," he said to himself; "no catch and try eat him second time."

The were about two miles inland, and, though they did not know it, they were not more than half a dozen miles from Palembang.

During the day preparations for hanging Jack were finished.

On the morrow he was to die.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE ESCAPE.

We must now leave Harvey and his faithful follower in their rude camp, while we return to Harkaway.

The position in which we saw him last was not a pleasant one.

But he had kept up his spirits.

From a short distance the sounds of revelry reached him, and he concluded that the Pisangs were making merry at his approaching death.

Rude songs were being sung, and the sound of musical instruments could be distinguished at intervals.

"They are making a night of it. I should like to have a look at them," he thought. "There is time yet."

Climbing up to the roof, as he had done before, he saw his guard standing in front of his prison door.

Lamps, trimmed with palm oil, illuminated a large, barn-like building near Hunston's house.

It was from this erection that the noise proceeded.

Jack rightly supposed this to be the council-chamber, for it was very similar to the one in Limbi, where the chiefs assembled for the discussion of public business.

One of his guards he recognized as Buru, who had accompanied the Tuan Biza, on his first expedition to the island.

The other he had heard addressed as Hadang.

Throwing his voice in the direction of the council-chamber, he imitated Hunston, and said:

"Buru, it is our wish that you bring the white prisoner before us."

Buru was not at all astonished at this command, and at once proceeded to put it in execution.

Opening the door of the prison, he exclaimed:

"Come with me. You must appear before the council."

"All right," answered Jack. "What is going on?"

"All the chiefs in Pisang sing the song of triumph, because the white man is in their power."

"And a jolly noise they make. Will they give me anything to drink?" asked Jack.

"They have the palm spirit of Pisang, but water is the fare of the condemned," answered Buru.

The guards put themselves on each side of Jack, and conducted him to the council.

He passed through an open door, and found himself in the presence of about fifty chiefs, who were sitting on mats placed on the side of the spacious hall.

Hunston was at one end, and the Tuan Biza at the other.

Both of them occupied a seat slightly raised above the others, as a token of high rank and precedence.

"How is this?" asked the Tuan Biza, in surprise, as he beheld Jack.

Hunston was about to ask the same question, when Jack made him say:

"I sent for him, O chief, to make sport of him."

An old chief rose and said:

"It is cowardly to insult the fallen."

"If it is the pleasure of our white friend, why do you, O Wahar, fly in his face?" inquired the Tuan Biza.

The old chief was about to protest that he had not intended to offend their white friend, when Jack, imitating his voice, said:

"The white chief is not worthy to be one of us. Let us hang him to-morrow instead of the prisoner."

An indescribable confusion arose at this suggestion, and another chief rose.

But before he could open his mouth, Jack made him exclaim:

"The proposal is good. Let us hang him and dance over his grave."

The uproar increased.

Making Hunston speak, Jack went on:

"The Tuan Biza and his chiefs are old women. What care I for them? I will fight them all single-handed, and give their bodies to the birds, and their wives shall lament them in vain."

"What!" cried the Tuan Biza. "Do you attack me, O Hunstani?" for so they had altered his name. "You dare not come to me, and say that I am a woman!"

"Daren't I?" Jack caused Hunston to answer. "You are worse than the timid deer, and your soul is as a reed."

"I have slain my foes in battle," replied the Tuan Biza. "You speak bitterly, O Hunstani; but I have the power to make you eat your words!"

"I laugh at your beard," said Jack, still making Hunston speak. "You shall die and your grave shall be defiled!"

"This is too much! Give me my spear!" shouted the Tuan Biza.

Changing his tone, Jack threw his voice close to Buru, and made him say:

"The white chief will eat you, O Tuan Biza, for he says truly that your soul is as a reed."

"Oh!" returned the Tuan Biza, "you are against me also. Take that!"

He had seized his spear by this time, and dealt Buru a heavy blow over the head with it.

Now Buru was also a great chief in his own estimation, and he did not like this sort of treatment.

Spears are hard, and if well laid on are apt to hurt.

So he retaliated, and gave the Tuan Biza a blow with a sort of mallet he carried, and hit him under the ear.

This caused him to roll over and over, uttering dismal cries.

Some friends of the Tuan Biza resented this, and attacked Buru.

He was supported by Padang, his companion, and they returned the blows with interest.

Jack jumped on a rude table, and surveyed the scene with satisfaction.

Several chiefs, thinking Hunston the cause of all the mischief, made a charge at him, against which he defended himself with difficulty.

Seeing he was getting roughly handled, Jack made his way to the end of the room, and pulled him into a corner.

The fight had now become general, and the Pisangs were engaged in a hard hand-to-hand fight amongst themselves.

The jealousy existing at all times among those distinguished warriors was easily excited, and they were only too glad of a quarrel.

During a disturbance of this sort they could pay off old scores.

They had been drinking their palm spirit, and were more or less excited by the songs they had been singing.

Hunston had been disarmed in the conflict, and looked sullenly at Jack, who held before his eyes the handkerchief which Emily had supplied him with.

"You have got this up," said Hunston, "but you cannot escape."

"That's all you know about it," replied Jack; "but don't tremble; I'm not a coward. I might kill you in a stand-up fight, but I shall not harm you now."

"What did you want to upset the council for? They don't understand your ventriloquism," continued Hunston, who wanted to keep Jack in conversation till the riot lessened and the combatants came to their senses once more.

"I was getting dull in that shed place where you shut me up, awfully slow, in fact; and when I heard you fellows enjoying yourselves, and having a bit of blarney, I thought I'd join in and sing you 'Rule Britannia,' or something lively."

"I shall never have the same influence over the Pisangs again. Look how they are fighting!"

"The Kilkenny cats are nothing to them," Jack remarked.

"Say something and stop them; you can do it," exclaimed Hunston.

"And get taken back and be hanged. Thank you, no; I'd rather not," replied Jack, with a grin.

"I'll promise you your life."

"Will you?"

"Yes, I will, indeed."

"What is your promise worth, do you think?" answered Jack, derisively. "You'd tell a bushel of lies for a dollar, and say your prayers afterwards with a good conscience."

"You must trust me for old acquaintance sake. Stop the row, and give them a specimen of your ventriloquial powers. It will put them in a good humor."

"You're very kind," Jack said. "Perhaps they'd enjoy the entertainment very much, especially as the show wouldn't cost them anything. But I'm sorry I can't stop."

"Can't stop? What do you mean?" said Hunston, laying his hand on his arm.

"Paws off, Pompey!" cried Jack, angrily.

"If you want a domino, just say which eye you would prefer to be temporarily darkened?"

"But I say you can't go. You must stop. You're a prisoner," continued Hunston.

Jack's knife flashed before his eyes, and he retreated further into the corner.

Taking up a lamp which stood near, Jack looked at it.

The wick, made of a bit of dry pith, floated in the half of a coconut filled with oil.

"It will do," he said.

"Do!" repeated Hunston. "Do for what?"

"You'll see, if you live long enough. Thought you were going to hang me, did you?" replied Jack, laughing.

He held the lamp to the side of the council-chamber.

It was built entirely of bamboo, which, being as dry as tinder, was exceedingly inflammable.

"You'll set the place on fire!" exclaimed Hunston, in alarm.

"Just what occurred to me, my pippin; and as the wind is rather high, I shouldn't wonder

if all Palembang was to go to blazes before morning," Jack answered.

"Help! here, he's!"—began Hunston, when the point of Jack's knife penetrated the clothes he wore, and pricked his breast.

"Do you want to go to kingdom come?" said Jack.

"No," muttered Hunston, sullenly.

"Then shut up. I don't want to kill you now; but necessity has no law, and if you utter a sound loud enough for a dumb man to swear by, you shall have six inches of cold steel in the neighborhood of the fifth rib immediately, if not sooner."

The bamboo framework had by this caught fire, and the flames began to spread with a loud crackling noise.

Those Pisangs who had been fighting were getting tired of the amusement.

The elder chiefs, who had been trying to pacify the combatants, were beginning to succeed in their efforts.

"Good-bye," said Jack.

"You shan't go! I'll!"—

Jack looked for a moment as if he was going to use his knife.

But he put it in his belt, and clenching his fists, let Hunston have what he called "one, two."

Hunston fell back heavily, half stunned, as he had often done before, when he made acquaintance with Jack's sledge-hammer fists.

His hat fell off, and Jack took it up and put it on.

It was made of straw, and it had a conical shape.

"Rummy sort of tile," mused Jack: "but I suppose it is a badge of distinction, or something. 'I'll sport it, and they may take me for him; not that I shall be flattered at the mistake, only it may help me to make tracks.'"

The flames had made incredible progress in the few minutes that had elapsed since Jack set fire to the bamboo framework with the lamp.

"They'd better call out the engines and send for the fire-escape," Jack said to himself, indulging in that dry humor which he could not resist even in the hour of extreme danger.

The thick smoke and the crackling of the fire alarmed everyone.

In an instant the din ceased, the uproar had subsided, and the men, who had been struggling together in a sort of Irish row, looked blankly at one another.

Jack passed quickly amongst the crowd.

They raised a cry of "Fire! fire!" and ran hither and thither wildly.

A panic had seized them.

Suddenly Hunston, who had picked himself up, shouted in a commanding voice, which trembled with rage:

"Guard the door! The prisoner has done this! Let him not escape!"

Cries of "Guard the door!" "The white prisoner!" "Death to the prisoner!" arose on all sides.

"It's getting hot," said Jack to himself. "I wasted precious time with that beast Hunston."

The smoke grew thicker, and obscured the feeble light of the oil lamps, many of which had been extinguished in the scuffle.

The dimness was much in his favor.

It was at the door itself where the real peril lay.

There Buru and some others, including the Tuan Biza, whose faces presented the appearance of so many crushed tomatoes, had congregated.

"Now for it!" exclaimed Jack, as he was within a few paces of the door. "Never say die!"

The idea was suggested by his natural daring and love of fun.

He thought it would create a sensation of some sort, and give him an opportunity; which it had done.

How he would be able to avail himself of that opportunity was another thing.

So far he had succeeded beyond his expectations.

He had got up ill blood between Hunston and his savage friends.

The Tuan Biza and the other chiefs had engaged in a dreadful riot, which had resulted in more than one broken head.

Hunston had been "chaffed and punched," as Jack said, when he was reckoning up the damage afterwards.

And to crown all, the council-chamber was in flames, the chiefs in frantic terror, and only a few cool hands guarding the door in obedience to Hunston's ill-timed summons.

Such was the situation of affairs.

Up to the present time Jack had decidedly the best of it. One of Buru's eyes was rapidly closing, and the other wasn't of much use.

But he had heard Hunston's voice, and with native cunning guessed that the prisoner had set the place on fire, hoping to escape in the inevitable hubbub that would ensue.

"If," he argued, "Hunston is at one end of the council-chamber, he can't be at the other."

He did not believe that even a white chief, clever though he might be, could be in two places at the same time.

So Jack's conical hat did not impose upon him.

Imitating Hunston's voice again, Jack said, as he reached the door:

"Let me out, my good Buru. I am Hunston, the white chief."

"You are the prisoner," replied Buru. "Yield yourself to me."

Jack's only reply was to draw his knife, and plunge it up to the hilt in his body.

Buru fell without a sound.

The Pisangs saw the deed committed, and were silent for a moment, through terror and amazement.

But an instant afterwards a dozen spears were leveled at him, and half as many ugly-looking clubs aimed at his head.

Cutting right and left with his knife, he backed through the crowd.

He reached the burning portion of the apartment, which was fringed by an eager knot of spectators.

The wall was burnt nearly through, and the roof had fallen in.

Fierce cries assailed him, and if he hesitated he was lost.

Hunston made a snatch at him, hoping to hold him fast till he could get assistance.

But Jack threw him off, saying, "You didn't do it that time, old boy!" and dashed boldly into the burning space and falling timber.

With a wild plunge he dashed through the hole in the wall, and half blinded, half suffocated, found himself outside.

The air was cool and refreshing.

At present the alarm of fire had not spread, and the inhabitants of Palembang were sleeping in fancied security.

His hair was singed, and his hat was on fire.

This he cast from him as a useless encumbrance, and taking one look at the burning building, ran at full speed up the street.

When his enemies had recovered from their surprise, they rushed through the open door, and gave chase.

Hunston was at their head.

"After him!" he cried. "He will take to the woods. After him! He cannot escape. Brave will be the chief who takes his head, and all the women of Palembang will smile upon him."

Jack's form could be clearly seen in the moonlight.

The pursuers halted at the extremity of the town, satisfied that they knew the direction the fugitive had taken.

They held a brief conversation, which re-

sulted in twelve chiefs, with Hunston in command, being told off to pursue the runaway.

The rest returned to the burning council chamber, to assist in putting out the fire, which had assumed formidable dimensions.

No sooner had Jack reached the open ground than he turned and skirted the town to throw the Pisangs off the scent.

As he moderated his pace and went round the town, he could hear the cries of the affrighted populace.

Gongs were beaten in every direction.

Dense clouds of smoke and bright flashes of flame showed him that the fire, driven by the wind, had seized on other dwellings, and was making great havoc and devastation.

"It's as good as burning out a wasp's nest," he remarked.

For more than two hours he ran without halting.

It was his impression that when those who followed him found themselves at fault, they would return to the burning town.

Three several parties of explorers would be formed, and dispatched in various directions.

When day broke he had reached a dense forest, and feeling tired, he climbed into a tree to enjoy a little rest.

Lashing himself with a handkerchief to a bough, he closed his eyes.

For some time he could not go to sleep, owing to the sharp hiss of the serpents and the dread cries of the wild beasts.

He thought with horror of Sindbad the Sailor when in a similar position.

Sindbad had two companions with him, and they were lower down in a tree.

On the first night a huge snake climbed, and dragged down one of the men.

Would the snakes of this island attempt to gratify their appetites in a similar manner?

"No serpent shall land me," he said to himself. "I'll sleep with one eye open."

But at length exhausted nature had its way, and he slept soundly.

Not for long, however.

He was awake before the sun had acquired any considerable power, and unlash himself he descended the tree.

All nature was smiling under the grateful night dew and the cheering sun's rays.

He pushed on slowly through the forest, not daring to retrace his steps.

His only hope was to subsist in the jungle as best he might until his friends from Limbi had come over and captured the island, if they could succeed in doing so.

He felt sure that Harvey was doing his utmost for him.

But he did not suspect the length to which Harvey's devotion had led him.

Nor did he even faintly imagine that he and Monday were at that very moment on the island.

"Dick won't desert me," he thought. "Dick will stick to me like a leech. That's one comfort."

He was in high spirits as he trudged along through the dense underwood.

To have outwitted the Pisangs, bearded Hunston amongst his friends, and set the town of Palembang on fire, was no slight achievement.

Suddenly he felt a peculiar sharp and itching sensation at his ankle.

Looking down he found his socks stained with blood.

Turning them down, he saw both ankles perfectly fringed with little insects like leeches, which had filled themselves till they were ready to burst.

Some of the blood-suckers had even crawled down to his foot, and made an incision which allowed the blood to trickle through his shoe.

Jack had heard of these annoying and disgusting pests from Monday.

Sometimes the stinging worms would drop from the leaves of the trees upon the heads and into the necks of those who pass under them.

It was almost unendurable to think that they were lancing him and sucking out his blood.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ACROSS THE BRIDGE.

It had not been Jack's hope or intention to escape when he determined to visit the council.

However, he knocked them off as well as he could, and traveled onwards.

At length he came to a river which ran through a ravine, the rocky bottom of which churned its impetuous waters into foam.

Cautiously he made his way by the side of the rocky channel. Jack pushed along in a listless manner.

He wished to find a cave in which he could rest, with a few palms in the vicinity to supply him with cocoanuts.

He had not gone far before he came to a hanging bridge, which was thrown across the ravine.

On each side was a road, if an ordinary clearing in the forest might be dignified with that name.

It was a suspension bridge of rattan; at the middle it rested on the top of tall trees, which grew up from a small island in the torrent below.

It was constructed by stretching across these large rattans.

On these, narrow slips of board were placed, and fastened at each end; other rattans starting from the ground on the bank, passed above the branches of high camphor trees that grew on the edge of the chasm in which the torrent flowed; descending from these branches in a sharp curve, they rose again steeply at the further end of the bridge.

From these rattans, were fastened other rattans below them, just as in our own suspension bridges, and thus all parts were made to aid in supporting the weight.

As it was so light, it vibrated and shook terribly when anyone ventured to cross it.

Jack had been told of these bridges, of which there are several in the islands, and had been cautioned against grasping the side, lest it might swing over and cast him into the abyss.

The difficulty in crossing this bridge, which was flexible as a manilla rope, was so great because it oscillated from left to right, and its whole floor did not move in one piece, but like a series of rolling waves.

"I don't think I will venture across that," said Jack. "But I'll go down the rocks, if I can manage it, and have a drink of water."

As he was speaking, he heard a loud shout behind him.

The next moment an arrow buried itself in a tree close to him.

He looked round and saw a party of Pisangs, probably forming one of the divisions that had been sent out to search for him.

Now he blamed himself for not remaining hidden.

He could not have acted more foolishly than exposing himself to view, on one of the few public roads in the island.

To retreat into the forest was to court instant death or capture.

The road was blockaded.

The sides of the ravine were just there almost perpendicular, and impossible of descent.

If he would escape there was nothing for it but a bold attempt to cross the dangerous bridge.

Without any further hesitation, he got on the bridge, with a hurried walk, which he hoped would break up the rolling motion.

It was nearly four hundred feet long.

Having got half way across the first span, he saw that one of the cross boards, on which he had been in the act of placing his foot, had become loose, and slipped on to one side.

He drew back, for had he gone on carelessly, he must have fallen through and been dashed to pieces on the rocks below.

Stopping instantly, he stood still, and the bridge swung to and fro, as if it was being purposely shaken.

The Pisangs continued to fire arrows at him, but the motion of the bridge interfered with the correctness of their aim.

Going on again, he reached the center, and reconnoitered his enemies.

One Pisang, more adventurous than the rest, was following him.

"Wait a bit!" said Jack, between his teeth.

He had gained confidence now, and crossed the remaining half at a quick run, hiding himself behind a tree when on land.

The Pisangs shouted to one another, and flattered themselves that their prey was not far off.

When the whole five were together, on the second half, Jack slashed away with his knife at the supports of rattan.

Three or four parted, and the remaining ones, unable to support the weight, snapped with a loud sharp crack, like the report of a pistol.

The large rattans that supported the sides, and went over the high branches of the camphor trees, had parted.

Then the bridge gave a fearful lurch, and finally the whole structure fell with a crash into the boiling torrent.

Fearful cries arose from the poor wretches thus hurled into eternity, but Jack smiled grimly, for it was their lives or his, and again he had triumphed.

His exultation was premature, however.

Straight in front of him he saw five more Pisangs, who were attracted by the cries of their countrymen.

They hurried forward, but all was still.

Probably the party had divided, one-half crossing the bridge, the other, which had perished, remaining behind.

They peered down the sides of the ravine, and talked hurriedly among themselves.

On, more curious than the rest, examined the rattans, and saw that they had been cut with a knife.

He pointed this out to his companions.

Yells of fury arose, and Jack, who was gently stealing off along the road, was perceived.

Instantly a hue and cry was raised.

"Now for it!" thought Jack, as he scudded along the road. "I must step out, or make up my mind to be cooked for dinner, and eaten without salt."

He had a slight start, but it was a question whether or not he would keep it.

His pursuers made the woods echo again with their savage outcries.

Jack's training in hare-and-hounds at Mr. Crawcour's academy for young gentlemen, stood him in good stead now.

It was a race for life.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE RACE FOR LIFE.

As the Pisangs knew the road and the country so much better than he did, Jack was afraid to take refuge in the forest again.

He ran on at the top of his speed, not daring to look how the chase progressed, lest he should lose time.

No arrows were fired at him; no spears thrown.

Either the Pisangs had received orders to bring him back alive, or they would not stop to adjust their bows or hurl their spears.

It scarcely could be that they had regard for his life, or an arrow would have been shot at him when he was bent on his perilous journey across the bridge.

Good runner as he was, he had not gone three or four miles before he felt his strength failing him.

Jack's head grew dizzy, and his legs seemed to drag one after the other.

The wound inflicted upon him when captured had caused him to lose blood.

This would create weakness, and even vertigo, if compelled to undergo unwonted exertion.

For some hours he had not had anything to eat and drink.

He was also running under a hot sun, which made the perspiration pour from him in streams. All this told against him.

The Pisangs had nothing to impede the free exercise of their limbs.

He had.

Therefore it was an additional disadvantage.

"I'm coopered," was Jack's mental exclamation.

He turned round, and saw that the pursuers had him well in hand—three in front and two behind.

They had never once lost sight of him.

On they came; bodies a little inclined forward, elbows pressed into the side, legs going like machines.

"They've got the wind of a bellows," Jack said, with a groan. "I shouldn't care if I had anything to fight with."

Like the stag, hunted to the extremity of his endurance, he turned round, faced his pursuers, and stood at bay.

"I'll die with my eyes open," he exclaimed, "at least, I'll see what kills me, and how it's done. It will be a comfort to know the *modus operandi*."

When the Pisangs saw that he did not run any further, they halted also.

The foremost made signs that they wanted to speak, and Jack said that he was listening.

"Are you armed?" said the Pisang.

"No; you can see I'm not. I shouldn't have cut and run if I had anything to fight with," exclaimed Jack. "That was why I heaved anchor."

"O white chief," continued the Pisang, "come back with us to the ruins of our city, for Palembang is now in ashes."

"That's a blessing; only it will make the beggars more savage," said Jack.

"You must die the death that has been decided on; I can hold out no hope of mercy, but I doubt not you will die like a brave man."

"That depends upon circumstances. What is the particular pleasant death?"

"It is the punishment of the stake. Every warrior in Pisang will be entitled to a piece of your flesh, about an inch square in size, till all the flesh is gone and nothing but bones remain."

"Thank you, then I shan't come," said Jack, in his usual careless way.

The Pisang raised his bow.

"You can tell them I am obliged for their kind invitation, but I have a previous appointment in another direction. I hope to enjoy the pleasure another time."

"The white chief cannot escape; his Pisang enemy will shoot him down and carry him wounded to the city," replied the warrior.

"Let fly," exclaimed Jack impatiently, "perhaps I can dodge you after all."

He remembered his knife, and prepared to dash forward and close with his assailants, so as to perish, as it were sword in hand.

The Pisang did not waste any further time in talk.

He drew his bow to the utmost capacity of tension.

The arrow quivered on the string.

Suddenly there was a loud report, and the Pisang, struck with a leaden messenger of death, fell heavily forward on his face.

Three other reports made themselves heard, and as many Pisangs fell; and the fifth stricken with a deadly terror, plunged into the tangled depths of the forest and was seen no more.

Jack could scarcely bring himself to believe the evidence of his senses.

Guns in Pisang, and people to fire them, and, what is more, to fire them in his behalf.

The age of miracles was come back again.

"If that isn't Dick's doings," he muttered, "it must be something that rhymes with Dick, and that's Old Nick."

Just then two forms emerged from some dense brushwood.

One was Harvey, and the other Monday.

Advancing towards Jack, they shook him cordially by the hand.

Monday danced and capered about in the wildest glee.

Jack was too much affected to be able to speak for some seconds.

"Well, cockalorum, how goes it?" exclaimed Harvey.

"Dick," replied Harkaway, "how you managed it I don't know, but you came up just in time to save my life, and I'm deeply grateful for it."

"Don't say anything about that, old fellow," answered Harvey. "I'm modestly inclined, and don't like to be praised."

"I was dead beat; a four mile run in this climate is a pipe-opener, I can tell, and it was six to four on the niggers."

"I knew you'd want me, and that's why I came."

"Have you landed in force?" asked Jack.

"No; Monday and I are alone."

"Have you ventured all by yourselves, into the enemies' country for my sake?" asked Jack, deeply moved.

"Why not? You don't think we came to explore the beauties of Pisang, in the interest of high art, do you?"

"Not exactly; but it is more than I had a right to expect."

"It is not. You had a right to expect that we should do everything we could for you," returned Harvey; "and as the bloated old Limbi chief wasn't ready, we put on steam and started. If you'd sent us a telegram we should have made a move sooner."

"There is such a thing as electricity of the heart, Dick; and I think our hearts spoke to one another," said Jack Harkaway.

"Very likely. I dreamt about you, and I thought you wanted me. Didn't I, Mon?" said Harvey.

"Yes, sare. You say, 'Go to Mast' Jack.' He in much big danger, and so we come," replied the black.

"You arrived in the nick of time. I was sewed up—regularly licked."

"Tell us all about it. What have you done?"

"I've seen Emily, and made it all square with her," replied Jack. "I've checked Hunston, and got up a small Donnybrook Fair in the council-chamber. I've been the death of six Pisangs, and I've burnt Palembang to the ground."

"By George, Jack, you're a wonder! Explain all this to me," said Harvey, in astonishment.

"I will, directly. It was more a fluke, after all, than anything else; but just now I'm like a parched pea. Can you lay your hands on any civilized or uncivilized sort of grub?"

"Certainly we can. Our ship is hidden not far off, and we have a few odds and ends in her. I'm not exactly a pocket Soyer or a sea-cook, but I can rig you up a good breakfast."

"Fire away, then. If it's boiled snake I'm on, like a hundred bricks," replied Jack.

Harvey gave Jack his arm, for he trembled violently and needed support.

They walked to the shore, where the boat was concealed, and were quickly engaged in discussing an excellent breakfast, when we consider the materials they had to work with.

A kettle was boiled, and some tea made from some of the hyson found on board the wreck.

This was very grateful and cheering.

After he had satisfied his appetite, and gained the strength he stood so much in need of, Jack related his adventures to Harvey.

"By Jove!" replied the latter, "you had a closer shave than even I imagined."

"I saw Hunston meant it," answered Jack, "and that put me more on my mettle."

"You are all right now, thank goodness; and the best thing we can do is to jump on board, and set sail for Limbi," remarked Harvey.

"No," replied Jack shortly.

"What!" cried Harvey in astonishment, "do you want to stop here?"

"That's precisely what I mean to do."

"Are you mad?"

"I don't think so. All I want from you Dick, is a rifle and a few charges of powder and shot."

"But think a bit; the Pisangs will have you; it's a moral. You've burnt thir city, and they'll swarm all over the place after you."

"I'll chance it. We can but die once."

Harvey reflected a moment.

"The Limbians won't be here for a day or two. You know what slow coaches they are, as well as I do," he exclaimed.

"I've got work to do here, Dick."

"What work?"

"Can't you guess?" asked Jack.

"No; hang me if I can!" replied Harvey.

"Then I will tell you. But first of all give me another half cocoanutful of that Souchong, or whatever it is."

Harvey did so, and Jack proceeded to drink the tea with calm enjoyment.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE sun was now rising high in the heavens. Jack began to get merry.

"I'll trouble you, Mr. Monday," he said, "for another of those dried fish. They're not equal to bloaters, but they're not bad."

"Um dried fish, sare? Yes, sare, very fine," replied Monday.

"I didn't ask you for your opinion; the fish is quite sufficient. You can dry up," answered Jack.

Harvey was dying with impatience to know what Jack's intentions were, though the latter did not show any signs of being in a hurry to gratify his curiosity.

"Fine day," said Jack, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, in the absence of a pocket handkerchief.

"What's the use of telling a fellow that, when it always is fine here?" answered Harvey.

"Don't ruffle your feathers, Dick! As I'm going to stop in the island, I like to study the signs of the weather."

"What are you going to stay for?"

"Can't you guess?"

"I've told you I can't once," replied Harvey.

"I never was good at riddles, as a kid."

"But you're not a kid now, and you ought to have improved. Why does a miller wear a white hat?"

"To keep his head warm, I suppose."

"Exactly," replied Jack. "That shows you're not quite a Simple Simon."

Harvey looked angry, and pressing his lips together, remained silent.

"Dick, you've lost something," exclaimed Jack, quickly.

"Have I? What?" asked Harvey.

"Only your tongue that's all. You're sulking because I won't speak fast enough for you. Did they tease the poor old boy?" cried Jack, coaxingly.

"Go on; I don't mind," replied Harvey.

"Forgive me, Dick. I feel so jolly at getting away from those Pisangs that I must chaff or die," exclaimed Jack, in a good-natured voice. "You would if you were me."

"So I should, Jack. I'm not angry."

"It's so freezingly delightful—that's the phrase out here—to have licked the skunks, that I can't help exuberating."

"That's a big word," said Harvey, smiling.

"Big words suit the occasion," answered Jack; "and now I'll tell you why I want to stay here. Emily is in the hands of the Pisangs; and, what is worse, in the power of that brute Hunston, who is a Pisang double distilled."

"I see; don't say any more, Jack. I was an unfeeling wretch not to think of that before," Harvey hastened to say.

"I don't want to stay," continued Jack. "We may be Damon and Pythias, but it would be too much to ask you to play the part of Pythias, to empty boxes."

"No, it wouldn't; and the boxes wouldn't be empty, for my heart and my conscience are big enough to fill the house."

"Close the show," exclaimed Jack. "You're a good sort; you're a trump, and you shall help me to rescue Emily."

"Or die in the attempt."

"Good again, Dick; they've got to kill us though, now we have these little pop-guns;" and Jack handled the rifle and revolver which Monday had given him, looking at them affectionately.

"Monday help too, rescue Missey Em'ly," cried Monday.

"So you shall. All hands are welcome," replied Jack.

"You should have seen Monday's getting up before we left Limbi; there was a wreck—all the crew were dead, and we had the first overhaul," exclaimed Harvey.

"What did he do?" asked Jack.

"Togged himself out till he was quite nobby, didn't you, Mon?"

"Never mind," replied Monday; "me show Mast' Jack one of these days. All very fine make fun of poor Monday; he know what him do know."

"Don't be riled, Prince Matabella," continued Harvey; you shall sport your things when we get back again."

Monday retired to pack up the remains of the breakfast, and from the way in which he talked to himself in his own language, he did not seem well pleased at the ridicule Harvey cast upon his newly-acquired European clothes.

To him, his attire was simply perfect.

It whipped that of his young master's altogether, and threw Mr. Mole's rather shabby dress quite into the shade.

"You say you have seen Emily?" observed Harvey.

"Yes, I did enjoy that happiness, but not for long, and under very trying circumstances," replied Jack.

"I should have liked to see you stir up the chiefs in Palembang; what a lark it must have been!"

"It wasn't all fun. I must confess I was in a dismal funk all the time."

"What do you think of doing about Emily?" asked Harvey.

"I fancy," replied Jack, "that as the city is burned down, they will be up a tree; that is to say, camped out anywhere, and in the confusion we might make a dash."

"Just like a man-of-war's boats cutting out an armed vessel in harbor."

"Something of that sort," answered Jack.

"When shall you try it on?"

"To-morrow. I'm so knocked out of time that I must sleep all day."

"I'll join you. Suppose we sleep under this tree, and leave Monday to watch," said Harvey.

"That's the idea," replied Jack; "call him; I'm so beastly tired, and can't raise my voice."

"Monday!" cried Harvey, "you're wanted."

"What um want him for, Mast' Harvey?" asked Monday.

"We are going to recruit exhausted nature; in other words, to sleep, and you must keep a good lookout. If you don't"—

"What den, sare?"

"We will get some chemical stuff and turn you white."

"He, he!" laughed Monday. "You have um joke, Mast' Harvey."

"You'll find it no joke when you're all cream and no chocolate. So keep your eyes open, and stick something under your eyelids."

Monday promised to exercise the greatest vigilance, and there was some necessity for it. The Pisangs were evidently swarming about the island in pursuit of Jack.

A party might discover them, and if no watch was kept they might be surprised before they could use their guns.

In a very short time Jack and Harvey were fast asleep.

They had every confidence in Monday.

The latter stood near the trunk of a tree, ri-

in hand, revolver in his belt, and looked searchingly by turns in every direction.

"Monday like to see um Pisang take him in," he muttered. "Monday smell um Pisang mile off."

A couple of hours passed, and the heat of the day was at its height.

Monday, like the other natives of the islands, owned the power of the sun at this particular time.

He felt drowsy, and had the greatest difficulty in keeping himself awake.

His eyes closed, and he was aroused in a short time by a slight noise.

A large monkey of the ourang-outang species had crept up, and was hurrying off with his rifle, which he had placed against a tree.

He did not like to take Jack's or Harvey's, for they had put them under their heads, to be ready at a moment's notice.

If he touched them he should wake them.

So he followed the monkey.

It went slowly into the forest, and Monday, not caring to go into the jungle after it, drew a revolver from his belt and fired.

The monkey threw up its ungainly arms and fell upon its back.

Monday advanced to take possession of his rifle, and was astonished to find the skin all off.

A full-grown Pisang was revealed to his view.

It was a disguise.

As he stooped to take possession of his rifle half-a-dozen strong hands seized him.

He had fallen into a trap.

The Pisang who had assumed the disguise had paid the penalty with his life.

But he had enabled his companions to succeed in their enterprise.

Almost before he could realize the fact, Monday was strongly bound.

He cast his eyes towards Jack and Harvey, and found that a score of dusky figures were busily engaged in securing them.

They had been surprised while they slept.

"Hullo," cried Jack, as he felt himself strongly grasped. "What's this?"

"Monday—Monday!" cried Harvey.

"You may go through all the days in the week, and it won't help you," said a voice in his ear.

He looked up.

"Hunston!" he ejaculated.

"Yes, my boy. We've been one too many for you," said Hunston, with a malevolent laugh.

Monday was marched up to the spot where his young masters were safely bound.

He hung down his head and was ashamed to speak.

"This is your fault," said Harvey, angrily.

"They come one dodge over Monday. Him think it um monkey and shoot, but then it too late."

"It's no good howling," said Jack.

"We're copped and there's an end of it."

"I'm glad to see you bear it with resignation," rejoined Hunston. "When I set out after you I did not expect to make such a haul as this."

"Didn't it burn well? It was a proper flare up. I mean Palembang," said Jack, smiling.

"You'll suffer all the more for it, and we can make another gallows, big enough for the three of you," answered Hunston.

Jack laughed again.

"You'll laugh on the wrong side of your face soon," said Hunston.

"Not I," answered Jack; "I haven't got a wrong side. I leave that sort of thing to you. I can't help laughing when I see you."

"Let them laugh who win," replied Hunston, savagely.

He spoke a few words to his attendants, and the Pisangs placed themselves in a triple line round the captives.

Their legs were free, though their arms were tightly bound behind their backs.

Hunston took their revolvers away from them and placed them in his own belt.

The rifle he told the Pisangs to carry.

"March!" he cried.

The party moved forward, going towards the interior.

"Cheer up, Dick," said Harkaway.

"I'm all right," said Harvey. "Only I can't help thinking that Monday"—

"Don't bully the poor beggar. They had him just as they might have had you or me. It was a dodge," interrupted Jack.

"Silence, there! No talking," cried Hunston.

"Who are you when you're at home?" asked Jack, with his usual impudence.

Hunston, delighted to have a pistol gain, flourished it in his face.

"Shut up," he said, "or I'll let you know."

"Will you?"

"Yes; and I'll pistol the first who disobeys my orders. Silence! March!"

The prisoners moved on again, and not a word was spoken.

"Don't rile him," whispered Harvey. "It is as well to bide our time."

Jack made no reply, but his pale face and compressed lips showed that evil thoughts were passing in his mind.

He regretted now that he had not killed Hunston the night before, when he had the chance.

But the chance was gone.

It was too late to think of that now.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

GRIN AND BEAR IT.

THE captives were placed in the midst of a guard, and the procession, if such it can be called, started for the ruins of Palembang.

Jack, Harvey, and Monday were together, their arms being bound behind them.

"It's all your fault, Monday," said Jack, with just the least tinge of anger in his tone.

"How on earth he could be such an ass, I don't know," said Harvey.

"Monday one fool," said the black. "Him deserve to be eaten."

"Perhaps they'll do it," replied Harvey; "only they may prefer white meat first, worse luck!"

"I don't know how the deuce to get out of this scrape," remarked Jack. "I shouldn't care so much about myself. It's you and Monday I am in a funk about. If you could get away, Dick"—

"Leave thee, leave thee, lad;

I'll never leave thee."

said Harvey, quoting the words of an old Scotch song.

"I know you're a brick, and you'll stand to your guns as long as anybody," said Jack.

"But hang me if I can help being riled at this turn up. It oughtn't to have happened."

Hunston was not far off, and hearing voices, he came up to the captives.

"No talking there," he said. "I don't permit it."

"You can't well stop it unless you gag us," answered Jack.

"Can't I? We'll see about that. What do you suppose you are going to do?"

"Grin and bear it," said Jack, with a laugh.

"That's what you'll have to do, until you're strung up," said Hunston.

"You said that before, and yet you didn't do it."

Hunston gnashed his teeth with rage.

"Perhaps I shall have better luck next time," he said. "I've got you safe enough now."

"Didn't Palembang burn finely, and didn't I set your chiefs milling like steam?"

"Don't cheek me. If you do, you'll find yourself in the wrong box," said Hunston, angrily.

"You can tie my arms, but you can't stop my tongue, unless you've got a gag," said Jack.

"Can't I? What does that taste like?" was Hunston's answer.

He hit Harkaway in the face with all his might, and as Jack could not use his arms to steady himself, he fell backwards.

The blood streamed from his nose, and he was a good deal hurt.

"That's plucky," he said.

"Do you want another?" asked Hunston.

"You can pitch in as long as you like to be coward enough. I can't stop you," replied Jack. "But just untie my arms, and I'll give you a toko for yam, my boy!"

"Get up."

"I shan't. You knocked me down, and you may pick me up, or ask some of your niggers to do it."

"Not likely," said Hunston. "If you don't get up, I'll kick you till you do. How would you like a toe in the ribs?"

He suited the action to the word, and Jack contrived in some way to get on his feet.

"All right, Mister Tuan Biza Hunston," he said, "I'll be one with you before long."

"You won't have the chance," said Hunston.

"You can't tell that. I've spared you once or twice, but the next time—if ever it does come—it will be a case of a tombstone with something written on."

"What?"

"Oh! something like this: Here lies Harry Hunston, the biggest blackguard that ever disgraced the name of Englishman."

"You dare to say this to me?" cried Hunston frantically.

"Why shouldn't I? Do you want to give me another nose-ender? Do it if you like; you are cock now, I'm only a hen."

"Wait till you dance on nothing, and then you'll alter your tone."

"Think so?" said Jack, beginning to whistle.

"The night before Larry was stretched!"

Going up to Harvey, Hunston said:

"Walk on with me. I want to talk to you."

"All right," said Harvey.

They separated themselves from the other prisoners and went on a little ahead.

"I've no particular ill feeling towards you," continued Hunston, in a slightly embarrassed manner, though you were always a friend of Harkaway's."

"I'm not ashamed of it. Jack and I are like brothers," said Harvey.

"You won't be long, for Harkaway will be as dead as a door-nail before this time to-morrow."

"And I?"

"Your fate depends upon yourself. I am all powerful with the Pisangs, though I do not think my influence would suffice to save Harkaway, even if I was disposed to try."

"Why not?" asked Harvey.

"The chiefs are so ashamed of being humbugged by him last night, and they are enraged as well at the burning of Palembang. He set the place on fire, and there is scarcely a house left standing. All the people are camped out."

"Can't they be generous to an enemy?"

"They don't understand the word," replied Hunston, "but you I can save. They will be content with torturing and hanging Harkaway, and that Limbian thief of a servant you've got."

"Monday?"

"I do not know what you call him."

"Oh! he's harmless enough. Show yourself a man for once, Hunston, and let us all go free. We will undertake not to molest you any more."

"Can't be done at the price, my boy. There is an old score between Harkaway and myself, which must be rubbed out this time, and I would not spare him if I could."

"If that is all you have to tell me, you might have spared me the pain of listening to it," said Harvey, in a tone of disgust.

"It is not all."

"Let me go back to Jack. I don't care about the society of a butcher."

"Who's a butcher?"

"You are; and an inhuman brute into the bargain. I will say it, if you kill me for it. You are not so good by a long chalk."

"Take care," exclaimed Hunston, with a savage, vindictive glance in his snake-like eye.

repeat that I don't wish to harm you. Listen to me. I feel rather lonely among the Pisangs, having no one to talk to except Emily."

"And her father."

"He is dead."

"How was that?"

"She swears I did it; but I didn't want the fool to kick the bucket. He insulted me, and I had him publicly flogged with bamboos, and I suppose his constitution couldn't stand it, though I only ordered him to receive two hundred strokes."

"Why, it's barbarous!" said Harvey.

"At all events," said Hunston, "it knocked old Scratchley off his perch, and Emily hates me like bricks for it. So you see I want a chum."

"You've got your Pisang chief," said Harvey.

"No good at all. I could cut a better chum out of a cocoanut than any of them would make. You be my friend, Harvey, and you shall not die."

"What!" replied Dick, with a feeling of loathing and horror; "I pal up with you?"

"Why not?"

"After what you've just told me—after your vindictive hatred to Jack—your flogging old Scratchley to death—and your determination to make the daughter marry the murderer of her father, whether she will or not?"

"You put it rather strongly," said Hunston, cowering beneath the withering look Harvey gave him.

"Not a bit too strong," answered Harvey.

"Do you consent?"

"Consent? I should think not, indeed. I'd die a thousand deaths first. You won't catch me buying my life at such a price. I'd rather chum with a burglar. The most desperate convict is a greater gentleman than you."

"Die, then!" replied Hunston savagely, "you're a bigger fool than I took you to be."

"If I had my hands loose, I'd punch your ugly head for insulting me by such an offer," cried Harvey.

"Don't provoke me too far," said Hunston; "or I'll serve you as I did Scratchley."

Harvey turned round and walked away, without giving him any answer.

Hunston was mad with rage.

Speaking in the native language, he cried, "Halt!"

Instantly the Pisangs stopped, and looked to their leader for orders.

"Two of you seize that fellow," Hunston went on; "strip him, and tie him to a palm tree. Two more of you break off a couple of long bamboos, and give him twenty cuts as hard as you can lay them on. Twenty from each of you."

In an instant Harvey was seized, and tightly bound with thick rattans.

His jacket and shirt stripped off, and his back laid bare.

"I'll teach you to cheek me, my hearty," said Hunston, smiling bitterly. "I'm king here, and you shall know it."

Harvey made no answer, feeling that it would be of no use to appeal to his tormentor.

There was nothing for it, as Jack had said, but "to grin and bear it."

Nevertheless, he gnashed his teeth angrily, and waited with a sinking feeling at his heart for the first strokes of the bamboos.

He was not kept long in suspense.

Whish! whish! they came with a sound like a hiss through the yielding air, and his back felt as if some one was stripping off the skin with a sharp knife.

At times low wailing moans escaped him, which were wrung from him by the severity of the pain.

But that was all; and when they cast him loose, after giving him the last cut, he trembled violently, while they dressed him again, and then rejoined Jack, who powerless to help him, had looked on with frantic rage.

"Did I bear it well?" asked Harvey in a whisper.

"Like a trump. Never mind, Dick, I hope its only lent. We'll pay him back again before long. What was it for?"

"He offered me my life if I'd be his friend, and I told him to go to Jericho," answered Harvey.

"Did he say anything about me?"

"Yes. You're a gone coon. Your case is past praying for; but now we're both tarred with the same brush, and I suppose the cowardly brute will have it all his own way."

"Perhaps Mole and the Limbians will come soon."

"They will come," replied Harvey. "Of that I'm certain; but the mischief is, they may come too late. How my back burns."

"I should think so. I'll ask Hunston if his fellows have got any oil," said Jack, who added aloud—"Hunston."

"What is it?" was the reply.

"May your men rub some oil on Harvey's back?"

"Not a drop."

"You are torturing him," said Jack, whose face flushed angrily.

"Just what I want to do. You don't suppose I had him flogged for nothing, do you? And you'd best shut up, or I'll give you a dose of it. Tell him he'll be out of his misery to-morrow," added Hunston, with a laugh.

Jack was about to make some reply, when Harvey touched his sleeve.

"Don't," he said, "it's no use. You might as well talk to a stone wall; and I shouldn't like you to cop it as well as me."

Much against his will, Harkaway remained silent.

"You're right. We must bide our time; though I should like to have five minutes' play with him with my fists in the open. He might tie one hand behind me if he liked, and then I'd back myself to lick him."

"He's a nice pup; but we'll make him yelp before we've done with him," replied Harvey, smarting with pain.

In a short time a halt was ordered, and a guard being established, the Pisangs threw themselves down to rest.

The heat of the sun had been great, which made the march very fatiguing.

Glad to follow their example, the captives sank on the hard ground.

Presently Monday looked around him; all was still.

"You sleep, Mast' Jack?" he whispered.

"No," replied Harkaway, "for my mind is so full of disagreeable thoughts that I'm not likely to be."

"Lie still. Monday use um teeth."

"What for?"

"Cut in two the rattans; then Mast' Jack make a dive for the woods, and get off," continued Monday.

"It's not a bad dodge, but I'd rather you did it for Harvey. I can take care of myself; something always turns up for me," answered Jack.

"Very well," replied Monday.

He rolled over a little, and got nearer to Harvey, to whom he communicated his plan, and soon his teeth were at work.

In ten minutes Harvey was free.

"Run, Dick, for your life," whispered Jack; "and go zigzag, so that they won't be able to hit you if they fire. There is only Hunston who knows how to use a gun, and the lazy beggar is snoring."

"Aren't you coming too?" asked Harvey.

"No. Monday and I will stop. We can't all hope to get away."

"I can't leave you."

"But you must. Think how much you can do for me. There are arms in the boat, and you can come and rescue me. Whether you are successful or not, you must try to get away. I got you into this mess by asking you to stop to help me to carry off Emily from Hunston. Poor Emily."

Jack sighed.

"If anything should go wrong with me, Dick," he continued, "promise me you'll be a brother to Emily. She musn't marry Hunston."

"She shan't if I can help it."

"I may be a croaker by this time to-morrow; there's no telling."

"Well, I'll go, in the hope of being of use to you," said Harvey. "Good-bye."

"Good-bye, old flick," replied Jack, trying to be jocular once more.

"God bless you!" said Harvey.

The next moment he was crawling on his stomach towards a dense jungle.

He had reached it, and was about to plunge into it, when a Pisang saw him.

Uttering a fierce yell, he discharged the gun Hunston had given him.

So bad was his aim, that, instead of hitting Harvey, he shot a comrade who stood near him.

The native fell to the ground with a groan.

Hunston sprang up.

"You blundering fool!" he exclaimed.

"What's the matter?"

The Pisang explained that one of the white chiefs had escaped.

"Which one?" cried Hunston.

He ran to the spot where he had left the prisoners.

Jack and Monday pretended to be fast asleep.

Kicking them in the ribs, he exclaimed, "get up. Where's Harvey?"

"You needn't kick a fellow like that in the middle of his first sleep," replied Jack, in a tone of remonstrance. "It is very hard a man can't have a nap for a few minutes."

He rubbed his eyes and yawned drowsily.

"Where's Harvey?" thundered Hunston.

"How should I know? Don't I tell you I've been nodding," replied Jack.

Turning to the Pisangs, Hunston said: "after him! I'll have all your lives, if you don't catch him."

By this time, however, the fugitive had got a good start, and, though the Pisangs ran hither and thither, they could not find him.

Hunston foamed at the mouth with rage. "He didn't appreciate your kindness at all. You were going to hang him to-morrow, and he's stepped it. Dick ought to be ashamed of himself!"

Jack's broad grin irritated Hunston.

"What do you want to work me up for?" he exclaimed. "I'll treat you as I did him, and make a cat scratch your back."

"Don't get wild. Dick's a very good fellow, but he shouldn't have taken his hook without saying he was going," replied Jack.

Hunston turned away, and assisted himself in the pursuit of Harvey.

It was fruitless however.

He had got safely away.

Then the order to resume march was given, and leaving the body of the dead Pisang, they continued their way to the town of Palembang, or, more strictly what remained of it.

Hunston was more sullen than ever; but he comforted himself with the reflection that Jack and Monday were still in his power.

The reached the smoking ruins of the town about nightfall, weary and footsore.

The people had made themselves rude shelters of boughs and grass.

Loud were their lamentations over their burnt property, and their household utensils, for few had saved even the necessary implements of domestic use.

The fire occurring in the night time had taken all by surprise.

Owing to the high wind prevailing, its progress had been very rapid.

Jack and Monday were placed in one of the

CHAPTER XXXIX

MONDAY'S DODGE.

Hunston expected to have the triumph of hearing his victim howl and cry for mercy, he was disappointed.

He bore the infliction bravely.

few houses, which, owing to their isolated position, the flames had not reached.

The door was shut and they were left to brood over their coming fate.

"Well, Mast' Jack," said Monday, "how um like it now?"

"Oh, tol tol; I'm pretty bobbish," replied Jack. "I think if I was going to be hanged in five minutes, I should sing my prayers instead of saying them."

"It what you call possum up gum tree now, sare."

"A very tall gum tree, too," said Jack.

"P'raps Mist' Mole come in night and walk into um Pisang."

"No such luck, I'm afraid."

There was a great noise outside, and looking through a crack in the wall, Jack saw the Pisang warriors beating back the crowd.

They had heard that Jack was the cause of the destruction of their city, and they wanted to get at him and tear him in pieces.

But Hunston reserved him for public execution, and the wild untamed mob was driven back.

"Want to lynch us," remarked Jack. "Amiable beings, these Pisangs. I wish my hands were not tied."

"Suppose Monday try um teeth, sare; and then you untie Monday when you free!"

"Stunning!" said Jack. "Cut along old chocolate and cream. You've got some sense in your noddle."

Monday set to work as he had done in Harvey's case, resembling the mouse which liberated the lion, by gnawing the meshes of the net in which he was caught.

"Bravo!" cried Jack, springing up in a short time, and stretching himself.

"That all right, sare!" asked Monday.

"Ripping! I don't know if my grinders are so sharp as yours; but I'll have a go in."

By dint of biting and pulling, he contrived to liberate Monday.

"Now um fight, before they take us to die," said the black.

Just then there was a crash, and something fell through the frail roof.

"Hallo!" said Jack, "Who's chucking bricks?"

"What that, sare?" asked Monday.

"I don't know. It's so beastly dark I can't see; but it looks to me as if somebody's teeth had dropped out."

"Oh! Mast' Jack, how you make um poor Monday laugh! Why hlm do it, when there so much misery?" said Monday, chuckling.

"That's the time to laugh, ugly mug," answered Jack, groping about in the dark.

Presently he stumbled upon a heavy stone.

"Lucky," said he, "that this little pebble did not light on my nut. I know which is the hardest."

"Ah! de debble!" cried Monday, in a voice of pain.

"What's up up now?" said Jack.

"Mosquito bite him on the nose," answered Monday, ruefully. "How um sting."

"Squash him then," cried Jack. "I thought I heard one of the beggars buzzing about."

"How him know that, sare?"

"Because I can feel a bit of paper tied to it."

"Paper?"

"Yes; and I shouldn't wonder if there was something written on it. Blow the darkness. It's no good asking you if you've got a match in your pocket, as one could in a civilized country; and as we're not cats, we can't see in the dark," said Jack.

"The moon him shine through that crack, sare."

"By Jove! That will do. There are more ways of killing a dog than hanging him, Monday," Jack said, in high glee.

He knelt down near the crack, and saw that the bit of paper, a very small one, had been written on with a pencil.

The writing was that of a woman.

"Emily, for a hundred!" he muttered.

With some difficulty he contrived to read:

"Dearest Jack,"

"Dearest!" he said, "I like that."

Then he went on.

"I took a walk near the coast to-day, and saw a quantity of boats lying off near the shore, hidden partly by the rock. They must be your friends the Limbians.

"Keep up your spirits. I was deeply grieved

[THE END.]

to hear you were recaptured; but I expect a night attack will be made, and rest assured I will open the door of your prison before they can come and kill you.

"Ever your own loving
"EMILY."

"She's a brick!" said Jack, in great exultation.

"What that, sare?" asked Monday, who was all curiosity.

"A friend has sent this letter attached to a stone. The Limbians are off the island."

"My people. That jolly! Then they not hang um after all," said Monday joyfully.

"I never thought they would, though it looked uncommonly black an hour ago. Hurrah, Monday! You weren't born to be hanged, you scoundrel!" said Jack.

"Mist' Mole come and fight like um tiger, sare. Monday like to see Mole fighting."

"I think Mole will be like the Yankee, who said to his men, 'Fight till all your powder is gone, and then run away; and as I'm rather lame, I'll start now, before the enemy comes up,'" said Jack, laughing.

"Ha, ha! him brave man," exclaimed Monday, also laughing.

"Hunston will be sold this time."

The door suddenly opened, and a voice said, "Will he?"

It was Hunston.

"You're rather too fast, Harkaway; and you shouldn't talk so loud," he exclaimed. "These walls are not very thick, and you didn't think I was listening."

A diabolical smile played round the corners of Hunston's mouth in the moonlight.

Jack's heart fell within him; and Monday would have turned pale if his skin had permitted him.

Here was a disastrous interruption to their plan.

Their hopes were crushed in the bud.

[To be continued in WIDE AWAKE LIBRARY, No. 1228, entitled "Jack Harkaway's Escape."]

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